

THE
NEIGHBOURHOOD,
A TALE.

IN TWO VOLUMES.

——— Licuit semperque licebit
Parcere Personis, dicere de Vitiis.

The best and surest method of advice,
Should spare the person, tho' it brands the Vice.

Burton's Anatomy of Melancholy.

VOL. II.

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THE NEIGHBOURHOOD.

CHAP. XXXV.

AS Captain Canvass and Mr. Selden approached the dining-room, they saw Mrs. Selden descending the stair-case.

Perhaps there are few situations in which a fine woman is seen at a greater advantage than when she is descending a flight of steps: the motion consequent in her progress, the efforts which she makes to keep herself in an erect posture, all conspire to give an agility to her body, and a dignity to her carriage.

riage. However this may be, Mrs. Selden certainly appeared in the eyes of Capt. Canvass as a very fine and a very elegant woman.

When on a level with them in the parlour, Mrs. Selden exhibited a fine and truly feminine figure ; and the smile with which she received the friend of her husband was beyond our description.

Capt. Canvass was charmed ; he was sure he thought that Mrs. Canvass and Mrs. Selden would be happy in one another's society ; and when she held out her hand to him on his introduction to her by Mr. Selden, he led her to her chair, emboldened by her pleasant manner, and sitting close by her, occasionally surveyed her countenance with the easy benignity of an old acquaintance.

To such a woman he felt no awkwardness in talking of another woman, in the terms of the most rapturous and unqualified praise :

he

he therefore, without scruple or restraint, launched out into commendations of Mrs. Canvass, and anticipated the pleasure which she would partake with him in hearing of the success of this experimental visit, for such a one he chose to call it; observing to Mr. Selden, that he believed that very few land-men would have relished so unceremonious a visit.

This sensible couple received this speech as it was intended, as a sincere compliment from the Captain; universal complacency prevailed in the faces of all the company, and as this will not be an improper occasion to pourtray the persons of this party, we will attempt it; for we presume our readers are all in some degree fond of the study of physiognomy.

Mrs. Selden was of the middle size, and inclining now to that degree of plumpness, which at a certain time of life prevents the appearance of approaching age, by commu-

nicating to the whole body a roundness and smoothness. Mrs. Selden's face, tho' still beautiful, had neither the proud and conscious reserve which is frequently seen in very handsome English faces, nor that false brilliancy and affected attractions which mark the wantonness of the ladies of France; she never aimed

“ To look delightfully with all her might.”

The face of Mrs. Selden was one of those which the elegant and sensitive Guido has frequently pourtrayed; and tho' the Spectator took infinite pleasure in surveying it, yet no impure thought arose in his mind; but every benevolent idea, every tranquil image of happiness was lighted up in his heart.

“ Such were the thousand decencies that flow'd
From every thought and action.”

Capt. Canvass was a short stout man, and had nothing particular in his aspect, except
his

his eyes, which when his mind was employed, darted an intelligence and a fire that proclaimed them eyes of command!

The person of Selden was slim, and his countenance remarkably placid; exercise, and a regular life, had given him great vigour in his motion and attitudes; and a serious turn of thinking had imparted to his face rather a grave cast; but as it was frequently enlightened by good humour and benevolence, and as frequently by the vivacity of his imagination, few miens were more striking as acquaintance increased.

"My dear," says Mr. Selden, in his introduction of Capt. Canvass to his wife, "this gentleman will do us the favour to dine with us to day." "I am very glad of it Mr. Selden," replied the lady, "as I shall have no occasion to day (says she with a smile) to make any housewifely apology about a family dinner, as I meant to dress a hare to day, expecting our son Thomas; and

tho' he is a punctual man, he may be prevented by business from leaving town exactly at the time fixed; I have transgressed, my dear, your rule of waiting for no body."

"Why really," said Mr. Selden, turning round to Capt. Canvass, "waiting for idle people before you go to dinner is endless; whim, fashion, windmill-patedness, and sometimes selfishness, prevent people from keeping the hour of appointment. As a man of business myself I know the use of time, and tho' a person has a right to squander away his own, he surely has not the same power over mine.—I remember," continued Selden, "a shrew'd observation of Boileau, the French satyrist, on this subject.—I have always been punctual at the hour of dinner," says the bard, "for I know that all those whom I kept waiting at that provoking interval, would use those unpleasant moments to sum up all my faults.—Boileau is indeed a man of genius, they would say, and a very honest man, but that dilatory procrastinating way

way he has got into would mar the virtues of an angel."

The company now sat down to a large table, without form or inconvenience; a large table, on which most things appertaining to it was placed at one time, gave as little waiting to the servant as possible, and as much comfort and pleasure to the guests as a total want of delay in the gratifications of their wishes could produce.—The state of mind of every guest at Mr. Selden's table enjoyed the same ease and absence of importunate feelings.—No jocose observation on a good appetite; no melancholy reflections on a bad one; no impertinent recommendation of what was particularly wholesome for this gentleman's complaint, or that lady's constitution; no tiresome and often repeated invitations to eat of this dish or that; no sour looks or mysterious winks passed between the master and mistress when any thing that was done amiss disturbed the rites of the table at Elm Place.

Mrs. Selden was indeed an excellent housewife, but with peculiar modesty she kept this talent a secret to herself ; all her guests, nay even her husband, never heard a lecture of any kind on the arts culinary, or even a hint of her superior skill and management. Those who sit at tables where ceremonies of a very different nature prevail, will easily conceive the pleasure with which Capt. Canvass partook of the dinner at Elm Place. When the entreaties of Capt. Canvass, and the kind commands of her husband, could no longer detain Mrs. Selden over the bottle, Captain Canvass called on Mr. Selden for the performance of his promise which he had made of relating to him his history ; a promise on which Capt. Canvass declared his compliance with Mr. Selden's wish to detain him at dinner was chiefly founded. Mr. Selden making a friendly inclination of the head to the Captain, began his narration.

CHAP. XXXVI.

MY father was a lawyer, and though of no great eminence, was sufficiently rich from the industry which he unceasingly employed in his profession. He was always in his chambers at the regular hours of attendance, and the intervals of reading were happily filled up by placing papers between the pages to which he meant to refer, and by mending or making his pens; an art for which he was early remarkable, and which had attracted the notice, and conciliated the esteem of Counsellor Scribblefast, the Special pleader, under whom he first learned the rudiments of law.

On praising my father on his pen-making skill, "Young man," says the ancient sage, "I augur well of the success of an artist who can make his own tools."

This axiom had more of illustration than connection with fact : For my father, as I have observed, was never illustrious in his profession, though his profits were considerable, and increased by a considerable place in the Court of Chancery, and dignified by a coif. In consequence of an affluent income, he hired a good house in a genteel street, and commenced an acquaintance with persons of some fashion.

As my mother died a very few years after her marriage, the society which frequented our house were chiefly composed of males, and those were yclept 'men learned in the law.'

My father early used to the verbosity of parchment writings, and the circuitous preciseness

ciseness with which they are composed, soon became, as far as his talents would permit, an orator and logician. On all subjects he talked as much as he could recollect, and was not restrained by the fastidiousness of selection, or the unimportance of the subject. Such were his rhetorical powers; nor was his skill in dialectics less worthy to be mentioned.

A philosopher of antiquity has remarked, that 'to doubt, is to begin to think.'—My father had heard, and approved this maxim; to all matters of discussion he brought a doubting, or at least an argumentative disposition; and to all assertions which admitted not of court evidence, he turned a deaf ear, and applied a look of diffidence and contempt.

My youthful mind soon became fond, and in process of time, imitative of the talents of my immediate ancestor. I soon fell into the infectious malady of a verbal diabetes:

My tongue run on in proportion to the feebleness of my meaning ; and with self-approved accuteness I lodged a *caveat* on every assertion which could not stand up against the utmost rigour of legal inquisition.

My promptitude in raising doubts where there was not the shadow of a question ;— my pertinacity in support of groundless asseverations, extremely delighted my father, and gained the sincere applause of the grave personages who frequented his table. I was of course destined by my father to the study of the law ; and he, in the enthusiasm of parental partiality, anticipated the ermine which was in course of time to cover my venerable shoulders.

“ 'Tis strange how some men's tempers suit,
(Like bawd and brandy) with dispute ;
Who to their own opinions stand fast,
Only to have them claw'd and canvass'd.”

Of

Of this idle habit my best friends in time cured me by gentle remonstrance; whilst my rivals excited me to further exertions by their own feebler attempts to outshine me.

But to return to my narrative: My own ambition, and the advice of my father, hastened me, after a short time, from the University to an Inn of Court. About this period a sister of my father undertook the management of his house, and left her residence in the country, where she had, to use a vulgar phrase, 'outstood her market.'

This lady was of a certain age, but what the precise time was she always kept a profound secret from her most intimate acquaintance, tho' Time was not quite so reserved on that delicate subject: He had written fifty years in the very legible characters of wrinkles, grey hairs, and ill temper. My aunt flattered herself that powder would silence one of those tell-tales; and she trusted to cosmetics for the suppression of the other.

In

In her youth she possessed that degree of beauty which attracted some admirers, and that degree of vanity which made her consider their attentions as too cold, and their pretensions too aspiring. But even these humble services declined, when with years she grew less charming, and the men more wise.

At fifty, Letitia the cruel, left the groves of —, whose trees no longer bore her name on their barks; and the streams that no longer warbled her name, to assume the useful but unromantic office of housekeeper to her brother in London.

The same temperament and turn of mind, which in her youth led her to the reading of books of love and romance, in her advanced age recommended to her the pious reveries of Jacob Behmen, and the i-amorous sem-compositions of Moravian theology. These tracts, especially the hymns, contained so happy a mixture of carnal and spiritual imagery,

gery, that Letitia Selden found fifty years were not a proof against their too tender influence; so that the poor lady passed many a dreary, and many a perilous hour at morn and night,

“ Between declining virtue and desire.”

My father, who knew the soft disposition of his sister, from the scandalous chronicle of a country parish, was very cautious of introducing any young men to his table. My aunt Letitia spent a very great part of her time in her own closet, heating her fancy, and confusing her intellect with the study of mystical divinity.

Some days, after dinner, when the coldness of her stomach and the weakness of her nerves induced her to increase her usual portion of wine, the screaming of this devotee, or what she called singing, according to the Westleyan gamut, would break in upon the solemn deliberations of the learned
junto

junto which grac'd my father's table. Not unfrequently has Serjeant Husky been interrupted in his very interesting detail of a late cause in which he was concerned, and which he had greatly contributed to puzzle and confound, in order to procrastinate.

This contempt of court, on the part of the old lady, excited the indignation, and stirred up the revenge of my father and his guests: to wit, the aforesaid Serjeant Husky, Mr. Benchet Puzzle-wit, and the grave Counsellor Ponder. They conspired therefore to drive her from the table soon after dinner; sometimes cross-examining her favorite theological axioms; at other times by casting the grossest ridicule on her religious tenets.

Flying from this war of words, she seldom attended at dinner when the aforesaid persons, learned in the law, were there, and confined her society to some distant females of her own age and humour, whose acquaintance

ance she had been introduced to by frequenting a neighbouring conventicle. Among the first, in point of rank, were Lady Diana Piper and her daughter, the present Mrs. Selden.

As the very precise, not to say priggish society, attendant on my father's table, was little suited to my taste, I used soon to quit the men, and join the parties of my aunt in the tea room. The chit chat of the ladies was certainly, to a person of my age, less fatiguing than the professional harrangues and disputes of the dining room. But a stronger motive than a dislike to prosing occasioned my visits to the tea room, as I soon thought I perceived in Mis Piper an easiness of manner, and a gentleness of disposition combined with a very interesting person; and excuse, Capt. Canvass, the vanity of a young man, I thought Miss Piper's eyes were brighter at my entrance.

CHAP. XXXVII.

WHEN I first saw Miss Piper I was entering my 25th year. The preceding four I had passed in the metropolis in studying the law, or rather in residing at the Temple. Tho' I did not bake 'my blood by profound meditation,' yet I soon found the dreariness of studious solitude, and the cheerless life of a batchelor, as inimical to my health as it was subversive of my natural vivacity.

When the petulance of early youth a little subsided, and the pedantic pride of College habits was subdued by well bred society, I saw the impropriety, and discovered the inconvenience of a disputatious temper, arising

ing from too great a desire of shining in conversation. I no longer took delight in prancing amid air-woven theories, or pleased myself in renewing long-deserted paradoxes. All my friends congratulated me on the restoration of my intellect, and the improvement of my manners.

To the law, with a view to practice, I never indeed felt much attachment; and the alteration of my opinions on polemic conversation, added to my dislike of the profession and its oratory. My natural taste for polite literature and general information revived; for though I did not aspire to be a deep geometrician, physician, or legislator, yet I was pleased to be informed of the principles on which the different sciences were founded.

To give some precision to my mode of thinking, and some accuracy to my diction, I sometimes ventured to exercise my critical skill in some of the Reviews. This employment

employment introduced me occasionally into the company of some literary persons, and in consequence to some literary clubs.—Such opportunities of connecting pleasure and information, was highly flattering to my imagination: I anticipated the uncommon delight which I should receive in these attic evenings, where knowledge would be imparted without jealousy or reserve; and the investigation of truth be pursued with calmness and candour; where philosophy would be above the fear or the envy of rivalry or superiority; and erudition would hold a language at once refined, dignified and perspicuous.

My Utopian dreams were soon dispersed: I found that learning has very little influence on its possessors, except to fill them with conceit of their own talents, and a contempt for those of others; to cherish a pride in their own particular pursuits, and to excite an envy and jealousy of contemporary scholars.—Learning, I discovered, did not
polish

polish the rugged temper, or humanize the savage one. I perceived that the Republic of letters, like all other Republics, is but a name; and that a literary Dictator will arise amidst the false modesty of some, the indolence of others, and the servile and unmanly proneness of many minds to passive obedience.

I soon therefore quitted the literary clubs, wherein, not seldom, the modest man of merit was silent, to avoid overbearing contradiction; and the dull, though able scholar, preserved a profound and constant silence, because he was conscious of his incapacity to answer the various questions, or to satisfy the ready objections of a more sagacious, or more eloquent opponent.—I often thought of the lines of our immortal bard:

“ There are a sort of men whose visages
Do cream and mantle like a standing pond;
And do a wilful stillness entertain

With

With purpose to be dress'd in an opinion
Of wisdom, gravity, profound conceit ;
As who should say, I am Sir Oracle,
And when I ope my lips let no dog bark."

Finding thus the only hopes of amusement and information disappointed, I grew tired of the noise and disgusted with the pleasures of the town and the labours of my profession.

On my mentioning these sentiments to my father, he somewhat abruptly asked me what plan I propos'd to pursue, when I should quit that which he had mark'd out for me, and which was at once honourable and lucrative. I was at first abash'd and silent ; not as having no answer to make, but I conceived that any reply to my father in his present disposition of mind, would be useless.

I did my father an injury in suspecting his want of tenderness and attention to my complaint. The next day he observed to me
that

that my health was much impaired by a residence in the metropolis, and asked me whether I should like to be a farmer.

Natural history had been my early and favourite study ; and to agriculture I had paid a particular attention, and the charms of the country struck my fancy with augmented delight, from my late close residence in town,

“ As one who long in pop'lous cities pent.”

my fancy anticipated with rapture

“ Each rural sight, each rural sound,”

and I readily adopted my father's proposal. The idea of turning my former studies to a profitable account in an employment to which I had been from a boy very much attached, struck forcibly on my imagination, and fired my ambition to distinguish myself in so useful a line of business.

Having

Having promised to exert all my attention and knowledge in my new profession, I soon entered on this very farm, having full discretionary powers to manage it according to my best judgment.—I will not conceal, Capt. Canvass, in this faithful sketch of my life, that in commencing farmer I met with many unforeseen and untoward circumstances. Succeeding to an indigent tenant, I found the land much exhausted, the fences down, the barns unroofed, and the mansion-house scarcely habitable; the best rooms turned into granaries, and the spare garrets were appropriated to pigeons.

The liberality of my father enabled me to surmount these difficulties; and my patience and a practical species of philosophy, that experience only can teach, bore me through other daily anxieties. I found, indeed, that my old friends the poets had much misrepresented the country as a place of innocence. The fraud, rapine, and laziness of my labourers, soon brook the spell of fancy, who dreams

dreams of 'rural tranquility' and the peaceful and Arcadian employments of the country.—Surly plowmen, brutishly cruel carters, drunken and very faithless shepherds, very wanton and very credulous milkmaids, formed the catalogue of my first year's acquaintance with the inhabitants of the country. The first batch of them I dismissed ; but finding the second not better, I was resolved to try by my own vigilance and activity, to remedy the idleness of my men, and to prevent their inroads on my property.

The neighbourhood consisted of rich, proud and illiterate citizens, a society which held out no temptations to divert me from my rigid plan of a total reform in my establishment, and from the diligence with which I pursued my agricultural improvements.

In the second year of my farmership I came to town on business, and being at my father's house in London, and attending my aunt's tea parties, I became acquainted with

Miss Piper, whose agreeable conversation revived in my mind a desire of being a married man, which the cares of my entering on my farm had only for a short time suspended.

CHAP. XXXVIII.

“IT is high time now, Capt. Canvass, to introduce you to the acquaintance of the Pipers. Lady Piper the mother was a very extraordinary character, or at least I hope so, for the general happiness of families. My attentions to her daughter raised many an angry frown on the brow of Lady Piper, and extorted from her many a rude and peevish speech. She could not have, or had she any dislike to the match between her daughter and me, as in the eyes of the world it was

was an advantageous one ; but the lady's temper was so selfish, that the happiness of her daughter gave her no pleasure, because it communicated no personal gratification to herself. She had once been a beauty, and had never thought of being otherwise, and she found growing old a very disagreeable *accident*, against which she had laid in no preparatory comforts, and no appropriate relief. Her temper, which was never good, was soured by that gradual neglect which the world shews to persons in advanced life ; and her full eye, which once perhaps beamed with joy and tenderness, now look red with fury, or was distorted by jealousy and envy.

“ Seldom she smiles, and smiles in such a sort
As if she mock'd herself, and scorn'd her spirit
That could be mov'd to smile at any thing.”

Philosophers assert that the fibres of the eye and the ear are so variously constructed, that colours and sounds of different intense-
ness please in proportion to the weakness

and strength of their respective organs. Petrarch relates, that a person was delighted with the croaking of frogs, whom the melody of nightingales could never affect. Lady Piper's ears were very similar to those of Petrarch's friend: for the lively notes of mirth were poison to them, but to the sound of sorrow and complaint her bosom beat with the most friendly unison.

In company with her dearest friend, Mrs. Croaker, she passed the only hours of real enjoyment: In their comfortable conversations, the order of the day was couched in the terms of the poet.

“ Of comfort no man speak :

Let's talk of graves, and worms, and epitaphs,

Make dust our paper, and with rainy eyes

Write sorrow in the bosom of the earth.”

In reading the newspaper, they hurried over marriages and other joyful celebrations, but hung with rapturous attention and
fond

fond delay over paragraphs red with fire or murder; over stories entangled in the intricacies of fraud, or glaring with open atrocities.

To conceive sorrow was Lady Piper's delight, and to utter it her business; as she performed this employment with no inconsiderable powers of dolorous declamation, her friends with an ironical complement used to style her the 'Elegiac Muse.'

Such defects are seldom found to be the product of nature, but may be referred, as in the present case, to a bad education.

The parents of Lady Piper, though in very poor circumstances, had brought up their daughter in unlimited indulgence; which their foolish admiration of her beauty had originally, produced and the consequent haughtiness of the daughter's temper, had compelled them to continue.

When in her mature years she mixed with the world, and found that she could not govern her associates with the same power which she had exercised over her indiscreet parents, she became malignant when she could not be imperious. It was her delight to embitter the pleasures which she could not controul, and to hurt the feelings of those whose conduct she had in vain endeavoured to direct.

The stile of her conversation was a perpetual sneer, and her demeanour was rendered disgusting, by a grin truly sardonic.

Sir Abraham Piper, her deceased husband, was a chearful, good humoured, and weak man, and had married her for her beauty against the admonitions of his friends, who had frequently apprised him of the very unhappy disposition of this spoiled child ; but to reason and to love too has seldom been the lot of much wiser men than Sir Abraham Piper.

Scarce

Scarce a month, a little month, had passed, before a separation took place between Sir Abraham and his lady. The advice of his friends excited him to this measure; they perceived his declining health, and the ungovernable temper of his wife, who being possessed of her object, a marriage with Sir Abraham, became unreserved in her conduct, which was at once fretful, imperious, and coquettish.

The age of Sir Abraham was that when marriage is a very hazardous experiment with men of amorous constitutions. A decided preference which Lady Piper paid to a young groom of Sir Abraham's, occasioned the separation to be very unfavourable to her ladyship.

Sir Abraham possessed not strength of mind sufficient to bear a separation, which every motive of prudence and just resentment enforced. He fell into low company, spent his income with jockies and gamblers,

and drank his two bottles every day in such society as the stable could afford. Mortgages had nearly swallowed up his estate, which was now almost reduced to nothing; when a speedy dropsy carried him off, leaving an only daughter, very young, with a small entailed estate as her only portion.

On the solemn asseverations of Lady Piper, that this child was Sir Abraham's, and as the time of her birth countenanced the assertion, the child was brought up with the mother, and under the care of guardians was well educated.

On coming of age, Miss Piper had agreed to live with her mother, as on the joint incomes of Lady Piper's pension and Miss Piper's small estate, the two ladies could live in a very comfortable manner.

Not abashed by the strange conduct of Lady Piper, whose interest appeared in her eye to make the match between me and her daughter

daughter very unpleasant to her, and who therefore was barely civil to me when I was at her house ; I continued to pay my addresses to Miss Piper, and found in the smiles of the daughter more than a compensation for the frowns of the mother.

I was glad to perceive that the follies, ill-humours, and haughty disposition of the mother, was as clearly seen and as fully detested by the daughter as by me, and all the rest of the world ; nor were I less pleased at Miss Piper's serious endeavours to hide and palliate the faults of her mother. She would oftentimes repel with a frown my peevish sarcasms on Lady Piper, and receive my jokes on her foibles with an uneasy blush, which quickly checked my untoward propensity to satire.

The selfish disposition of the mother broke out sometimes in open fury, and at other times in pointed sullen malignity ; and

I know not, between the evil dispositions of Lady Piper, and the very delicate scruples and affectionate attentions of the daughter to her, how long I might in vain have breathed my love-sighs in the desert air, had it not been for the kind attentions of my father, who interfered with all the tenderness of a parent, and with all the sagacity of a man well versed in the science of mankind."

CHAP. XXXIX.

I Need not, Captain Canvass, enlarge with a lover's fondness on the personal charms of Mrs. Selden, in which, tho' time has made a considerable change, yet the eye can form a retrospective judgment even now of what she was.

Miss Piper's charms were her least recommendation ; her mind was correct, and her heart without disguise. The placid delight with which I used to survey the serenity of her countenance, oftentimes brought to my remembrance the simple, yet elegant lines of an old ballad that well described Miss Piper's person, and its effect on the beholder :

“ For Cupid, crafty boy,
Close in a corner stood,
Not blindfold then—to gaze on her
I guess it did him good.”

Our courtship was without disguise, and without mutual pain ; it was without flattery on one side, and it was without coyness on the other. I wrote no verses on her eyebrows—I talk’d not of her cruelty—and she complained not of my presumption.

Our happy moments, when we were together, were endeared by tender looks and unremitted attentions on both sides. Ferdinand did not with more chearfulness bear the logs for his loved Miranda, than I did the abhorred company of Lady Piper, for the sake of my dear Lucinda. I sometimes in my heart condemned the meanness of my compliances, but at the re-entrance of my mistress I repeated with the sincerity of Ferdinand,

“ This

“ This my mean task would be
As heavy to me as 'tis odious, but
The mistress which I serve quickens what's dead,
And makes my labours pleasures : O she is
Ten times more gentle than her mother's crabbed.”

After a full declaration of my inviolable attachment, and receiving an acknowledgment by her looks that my passion was not displeasing to her, I went back again to my farm, from which I had absented myself longer than I intended.

I will not pretend, Captain Canvass, that my departure on this occasion from town, was worthy either of a philosopher or a farmer.—I regretted my absence from my mistress ; I felt for the first time disgusted with my solitude, and shrunk from the labours of my employments in the field.

A farmer who returns after three weeks absence to his home, has many a sad retrospect to take, many a complaint to attend to, many
an

an error to rectify, and many a bill to discharge.

Whilst my mind continued between the struggle to regain my usual assiduity and diligence, and the pleasure I felt in the reflection of the past three weeks, my letters to my father, which were wont to be weekly, giving him an exact account of my progress in agriculture, were now put off for a fortnight, and sometimes for a month. One morning I received a long letter, and written in very gentle terms of reproach for my silence ; containing likewise conjectures that either I was very ill, or under some embarrassment ; and ended with saying that he should be with his bailiff, as he was used to call me, on the following day.

This letter reminded me that I had, with the usual shyness of lovers, concealed, or at least not mentioned my attachment to Lucinda Piper to my father, which omission I
was

was resolved to apologize for during his visit to me.

This resolution appeared easy to me on seeing the good spirits which my father exhibited at his entrance. This was the first visit he had paid me : He admired the comfortable additions which I had made to the house, and the neatness by which all the premises were distinguished.

“ Well, son,” says the old man, after a glass or two of my home-brew’d ale, “ all this is very well ; but have you thought of no one to sit at the head of your table ? Shall I recommend one ? ”

I bowed awkwardly.

“ Let us drink Lucinda Piper ;—the old woman breaks apace : I have told her my mind upon the matter, and I believe that will soon make an end of her, for she could not have been more angry had she lost her
cause,

cause, after the expences of a special jury. I told her I should advance you an annuity equal to what Miss Piper's income was during her life ; and so I parted with the old lady in rather better humour. Now, not hearing from you for a month, I began to fear that the farmer was lost in the lover, so I came here to settle the matter with you, that you may enter on the honourable estate of matrimony, son, as soon as you and the young lady can agree. I perceived, son," continued he, " that you must have been in love when you left my table so soon one day after dinner, though Councillor Ponder was that very hour exhibiting all his doubts on the various cases to which he alluded with more than usual prolixity and preciseness ; and Serjeant Shuffle was preparing to solve them with an uncommon degree of the powers of acute quibbling, and ingenious evasion and misapprehending. It was a great treat, let me assure you, for a professional man of any talents or taste."

Suppressing

Suppressing a smile at the old gentleman's sagacity in finding out my affection for Lucinda, which I had never concealed, I thanked him very heartily for his kind attention to my happiness, and highly applauded the knowledge of human nature which he had shown in the discovery of my passion in that particular instance.

The next morning we returned to London, and in the course of three weeks I was married and settled here. About a year after, Lady Piper and her old friend Mrs. Croaker left this vale of woe for a better world. Mrs. Croaker fell down in an apoplexy, occasioned by her running too soon after a full dinner to Lady Piper's, to communicate some bad news, from some of the English colonies, to Lady Piper.—The latter, not long afterwards, was seized with a fit of the jaundice, and died with fretting at seeing her society altogether neglected, soon after the marriage of her daughter, who was the only person that could drive

drive solitude from the house of a woman, whom the infirmity of age had not rendered more uninviting, than the peculiarities of her natural disposition had made her formidable to most of her acquaintance.

My aunt, Letitia Selden, did not long after continue to superintend the temporal affairs of her brother. Moravian hymns, and mystic divinity employed and alleviated too often the mornings of my aunt, and my father gave her a strong hint that he wished her not to trouble herself with the toils of housewifery any further.

But a woman once set at the head of domestic affairs, does not with a good grace retire from office ; and a downright quarrel ensued between the brother and sister before the latter would give up the keys of her place. My father allowed her a very considerable annuity, with which she lived comfortably in the neighbourhood of her favourite preachers, whose uncomfortable views of the present
life,

life, and very incoherent descriptions of a future existence, threw my aunt into such a state of nervous debility, that despair at length brought with it the only cure to her fears, her doubts, and her sorrows, a sudden death—which saved the poor woman from a madhouse, to which the vacillating condition of her mind was every day more nearly conducting her.

My father left alone, and approaching to what Shakespeare calls his ‘chair days,’ retired from business altogether, and passed his winters at Bath, and his summer months with me here, till his death, which happened a few months ago.

This farm was the only remaining property he had retained, by leading a life which the world calls genteel, and which, if it had not been my father’s conduct, I should have pronounced foolish; as his mode of living was more than equal to his power of expenditure.

But

But the word *genteel*, like many other indefinite terms current in the world, has done a great deal of mischief.

But I did not mean, Captain Canvass, to read you a moral treatise, but to give you a simple history of my life and opinions, which, if you approve, I shall be happy in your acquaintance.

CHAP. XL.

THE narration of Mr. Selden had led them into the second bottle ; and as their mutual confidence increased, they seemed little inclined to quit the dining room till the emptying of it.

I have not sold you, Mr. Selden, said the Captain, my early history, which, though it abounds not with matter to surprize, yet some traits of my life and education may be amusing.

My father was a clergyman, and having obtained a College living rather late in life, married as soon as he could afterwards.—The lady to whom he gave his hand was nearly of his own age, and at a period of life when pregnancy is in general dangerous
to

to the sex. An early attachment induced my father to make this match, and my birth was rendered an unhappy event by the death of my mother.

My father, though a man of strong principles, had yet little sensibility ; for he soon returned to his books again, and forgot soon, as he used to relate, in the pursuit of some mathematical truth, the loss of his consort. He used likewise to observe, that the many years which he passed at College made him indifferent to the social passions ; and he was wont to consider any duty in life as irksome, which stole an hour from his favourite studies, of which the basis was abstraction.

At a proper time I was initiated in the mathematics, and very early began to read the elements of Euclid. This study took possession of me ; and all books of imagination were to me tasteless, or unintelligible. I learned as much Latin as would help me
in

in reading my favourite authors, and was contented with my narrow circle of erudition.

I have somewhere seen a Latin proverb, which says that our studies form our moral habits. This was true with respect to myself: I became a very grave and steady boy, and mathematical instruments became more my favourite toys, than a gun or a poney.

When I was about fifteen, a relation procured me a situation on board a ship of the line. I soon entered on my office; and my parting with my father was attended with no tear or pang on either side, and the last hour I passed under the paternal roof, was employed in reciting the variations of my compass to my father, who nodded approbation of my accurate enunciation.

Two years afterwards I heard my father was stricken with the palsy, in consequence
of

of his intense and unintermitting application to his abstract pursuits. As he was a second brother, the little money he possessed was remitted me, and I continued to act the part of a British seaman with renewed zeal, for the honour of the British flag ;—and sometimes the Gazette would mention the name of Lieutenant Canvass not without some share of credit.

I was not sent to sea, Mr. Selden, as many boys are, because they are idle, profligate and dull, and unfit for any thing else—(a strange practice too frequent among some parents)—but I entered his Majesty's service with a singleness of heart, and an activity of disposition, which made my duty as clear to me as it was easy.

I acted under superior officers, whose characters I despised, with as much fidelity as if I had honoured them : and I undertook all enterprizes, as if I thought them without danger and without risk. I thought
only

only of Old England's glory and my own duty, and I knew no foe but my country's enemy.

I was enabled, by the calmness of my disposition, to persevere, without effort, in my laborious occupation.—Love, as it is a passion which selects out one woman for the object, I felt, and sometimes smarted under, but that passion which hurls reason from her throne, and changes a man into a whimpering lubber, I never experienced; or had I, should have I been willing to disclose it.

During the intervals of my service, when I left my station to recover my health, I generally passed my time with an uncle, an elder brother to my father. He was a great foxhunter, a man of robust make, and possessed of such lungs, that his utterance reminded me of a speaking trumpet.

He followed during the winter his business, for so I may call it, of fox-hunting,

when the weather would permit; when it rained or froze, he used to help the servants to chop wood, or to saw, or stack it; at other times he would dress himself like Robinson Crusoe, and carry on a morning campaign against the rats in his barns, or relax himself with his turning shop, which he called his study, and which in fact was the only one he had; for being a man of fortune, his mode of education was such, that the expence of a library would have been a very superfluous one; and he thought every merit consisted in the perpetual exercise and skill of field sports.

The verses of Nat. Lee on his favourite pursuit he used frequently to repeat, with a voice and gestures that would have done honour to the mad bard himself.

“ When through the woods we chas’d the foaming boar,
With hounds that open’d like Thessalian bulls,
Like tygers flued, and fanded as the shore,
With ears and chests that dash’d the morning dew;
Driv’n with the sport, as ships are toss’d in storms,

We

We ran like winds and matchless was our course ;
Now sweeping on the summit of a hill ;
Now with full career come thund'ring down
The precipice, and swept along the vale."

With this 'Centaur not Fabulous,' I did not long reside ; and during my stay with him very seldom frequented his table, as it was a scene of eternal noise, and clamourous histories of Reynard's entrance and his exit.

My education had given me a serious cast of mind and an inclination for books : many a time when I was retiring to my bed was my room forcibly entered by a whole troop of my uncle's bacchanalian companions, and I was, as a passport to my repose, forced to swallow a bumper of double stout from a china fox's head : this ceremony was attended with three shouts, and several pretty hard claps on the back, and the dull ear of night was alarmed by the tremendous sound of tally-ho, uttered with great noise by these merry knights of the horn.

As a man who is not a fox-hunter is in every view as improper a companion to those who are learned in this science, as he would be among a set of lawyers on a circuit if he was not of their profession, I felt myself like a fish out of water at my uncle's house. I was frequently ridiculed by my relation for being so damn'd stupid as not to love fox-hunting ; and often by some wags in the company, I was as frequently interrogated on the method of riding the sea-horse. As a man cannot quarrel with a whole company, I very soon left the table of this singular species of stable pedants, and endeavoured to find some other amusement for my afternoons.

CHAP.

CHAP. XLI.

THERE lived very close to the Esquire a person who had retired from business in London, and had purchased a neat little domain in my uncle's parish. Though he had lived on this spot for some years there was no communication between my uncle and Mr. Bonus; a violent quarrel at his first coming there, between my uncle and Mr. Bonus, cut off all hope of any connection taking place between the two families:— The occasion of it was this: Mr. Bonus, from long residence in London, was a very bad rider, and never ventured on any horse but that which drew his chaise on Sundays; he moreover being somewhat gouty used to ride with his legs in gambadoes.

One day the unfortunate citizen was taking the air on Dobbin, with a new pair of gambadoes lined with scarlet, and which made the eye of the citizen a truly respectable appearance: it so happened however, that whilst Mr. Bonus with these splendid gambadoes was gently ambling his nag on the turnpike road, my uncle 'squire Canvass's hounds were crossing the same: the scent growing colder and colder, the dogs began to spread abroad too much, and some of them followed Mr. Bonus.

As a fox-hunter is a very great man in his own opinion, and invested with great self-importance, my uncle rode up to Mr. Bonus, and brandishing his whip in the air in the attitude of some menace, asked him 'what the devil business he had to pass the road just at the time of his hounds taking that direction?' To this very civil question the poor citizen was too much astounded with the voice and gestures of my uncle to furnish any answer, but was retiring very peaceably

on

on his way back, when my uncle called after him, 'remember, Mr. Quizbob, not to come this way ever again at your peril, for your damn'd fiery gambadoes have frightened the staunchest hounds in England, and they have been staring at your leg cupboards for this last half hour.'

Glad to liberate himself from the threats and vengeance of this rustic tyrant, Mr. Bonus went the nearest way home, and the next day was seized with a fit of the gout; and hearing that his next neighbour was the master of these hounds, he was very cautious in future of going near his house, or riding the way which he thought likely that this furious Nimrod might choose to appropriate to himself for that day.

With Mr. Bonus however I gained acquaintance: he was a man of some reading, and had a collection of books, which, if they were not well-selected or numerous, were however very finely bound and lettered, and certainly were pretty furniture for the best room in his villa.

Mr. Bonus had been some time a widower: he had married a woman much his senior by the recommendation of his friends: this love by proxy he at times repented, and found that marriage, animated by affection hung a dead weight on the principal springs of life; and when the lady died, he easily consoled himself by the wealth she had left behind.

He had an only daughter about seventeen; her person was slim, and her face without much beauty was feminine; the languishing look of her eyes would in the judgment of a voluptuary have been very interesting, to a man of my steadiness it was alarming; but frequently conversing with a woman, whose manners and person are not repelling, soon leads to attachment, if no intervening object distracts the attention.

Mr. Bonus lived very retired; Miss Bonus seldom saw any company. Now and then she would prevail upon her father to let a friend come and stay with her a few weeks; this

this had not occurred since the death of her mother.

The long absence of Miss Wagstaff, her dear friend, was frequently lamented with sighs and tears by Miss Bonus; her virtues were continually resounded, and declarations that she could not live without her dearest friend, prevailed on the father to invite Miss Wagstaff to his house.

A few days after my acquaintance with Miss Bonus, Miss Wagstaff arrived; she appeared much older than her friend; her demeanour was grave and her person masculine. After the arrival of this lady, I could not gain a smile or even a civil answer from Miss Bonus, to whom I began to feel something like an attachment. In the morning the ladies were continually up stairs together; in the afternoon they sat whole hours on the sofa, as close together as possible, their hands locked fast in each other's, and their eyes looking languishingly and mutually ten-

der; whilst Miss Bonus would frequently heave deep sighs, and pressing the hand of Miss Wagstaff, called her 'her dearest Arabella.'

I should find that Miss Bonus was one of those honeysuckle females who wish to entwine themselves round some friend to whom they can confide secrets, relate their sorrows, and ask advice of when they are already determined to follow their own.

Miss Wagstaff seemed a woman of strong understanding, and soon perceived the feebleness of her friend's mind; and having heard all her secrets, felt the power which she had over her.

Miss Bonus, who considered herself much the superior in point of wealth, would sometimes assume those airs which a consciousness of being rich will frequently instigate stronger minds than that of Miss Bonus to assume. — These little presumptions Miss
Wagstaff

Wagstaff sometimes repelled with a frown, and sometimes suppressed by a sarcasm : these little quarrels were soon made up by Arabella kissing the tear from the cheeks of the melting and repentant Lydia Bonus : but such tender friendship was of too refined a nature long to live in this cold atmosphere of our present existence.

The dear, sweet, and adorable Arabella Wagstaff, the bosom friend of Lydia Bonus, had made a very serious impression on the reflecting mind of Mr. Bonus : he saw the friendship subsisting between his daughter and her companion ; in the former he perceived imbecility propping herself on the arm of vigour, in the latter he saw sense and shrewdness holding out aid to a dependant and a dupe.

In the life-time of Mrs. Bonus, Miss Wagstaff had perceived her influence with Mr. Bonus, and did not doubt on a visit subsequent to her death that she should persuade

him to marry her : with this view she cultivated the good graces of Miss Bonus, by answering her eternal epistolary correspondence written in the tone of namby-pamby softness, and returning her caresses of childish and ridiculous fondness.

The conduct of Miss Bonus soon after the arrival of Miss Wagstaff, totally extinguished my rising passion for her ; and I soon heard with pleasure that Mr. Bonus had given her in the person of Miss Wagstaff a mother-in-law, who knowing all her mind, could controul its weakness and check its childish propensities on future occasions.

Some years after I found my health decline, and I left the sea service. On a visit to a relation, Mrs Wigley of — street, whose husband had retired from business, and was sometime deceased, I found my present wife ; pleased with her manners, and interested in her little boy, I soon determined to marry her.

This

This offer Mrs. Staunton accepted, after informing me of all the particulars of her former life.

CHAP. XLII.

TEA was now announced, and the two new friends shook hands very cordially and retired to the tea-room, where they joined Mrs. Selden, and on discoursing on various subjects, Captain Canvass was as much delighted with the elegant manners and easy wit of Mrs. Selden, as he had been captivated by the sound understanding and manly deportment of the husband. In the former he anticipated a very agreeable companion for his wife, and in the latter a very useful and confidential friend for himself and young Canvass.

The

The houses of the Cassino and Elm Place were now connected by the strictest amity, and young Canvass soon became acquainted with Miss Tonic, who frequently during her father's short recoveries, visited her old and valuable friend Mrs. Selden.

Virtue is, to speak in the language of philosophy, a conductor *per se*: and the mutual affections of Miss Tonic and young Canvass were soon too ardent to be concealed from their friends, and too agreeable not to be sincerely approved of by them. Love resembles the sensitive plant, and shrinks from all interference; this was a truth the delicate mind of Mrs. Selden was well acquainted with, and therefore desired her husband, who was pleased in speaking of it to her, not to shew any consciousness of it to Miss Tonic or young Canvass. "My dear," said Selden with a smile, "in affairs of love women are much superior to men, and I shall implicitly obey your commands.

As

As young Canvass enjoyed the society of Miss Tonic at Elm Place, he was very seldom there when Dr. Tonic was a guest, as his delicate passion could not have brooked the licentious prattle of the doctor, nor his spirit have easily submitted to it.

While these precautions were taken to keep the courtship unknown to Dr. Tonic, the death of the doctor was announced to Mrs. Canvass by Miss Tonic, informing her that a sudden attack of the gout had taken him off, amidst some facetious conversation in his own style, which he was holding with his nurse: she added that the grief of Mrs. Tonic appeared likely to deprive her of her reason and her life.

The fondness of this weak woman for her husband was so much beyond rational attachment, that she had never perceived the fast declining health of old Tonic, though it was manifest to every one else in the house.

But

“ But Love would hope where reason would despair.”

The sudden calamity turned the brain of the poor woman, or rather the weakness of her intellects was brought out more by the pressure of this misfortune.

At sixty years of age the follies of youth had not subsided ; but she vowed now to think no more of another husband, but wear her widow'd weeds for ever and anon.— When her fever was at the highest, she decorated her white locks with fresh gathered daisies; and attired in the habit of ‘ Ophelia,’ she imitated, with a crack’d voice, the sweet and melancholy tones of her youthful original, and ‘ startled the dull ear of night’ with her piteous complaints :

“ And will he not come again ?

And will he not come again ?

No, no, he is dead,

Go to thy death bed,

He never will come again.”

Mrs.

Mrs. Canvass, on the receipt of the letter written by Miss Tonic, on her father's death, paid her a visit, and with very little entreaty continued with her some time after the burial of the doctor.

The conduct of Mrs. Tonic, on her husband's death, might have appeared to strangers to have been a phrenzy, brought on by excessive grief for the loss of a man she loved : But Mrs. Tonic had set out in life with very little feeling for others, but with a very prurient fancy which she had much augmented by reading amorous plays and romances ; so that to her imagination, the title of an husband conveyed every thing that was valuable ; and though both her husbands were men of neither talent or virtue, yet such was her own want of understanding, that their loss gave her the most poignant sorrow.

Old Tonic's long ill-treatment of her, drove her frequently to the brandy bottle ; and during these oblivious draughts, her conduct was
childish,

childish, and sometimes alarming. One night, after having too freely made use of her usual anodyne, Mrs. Tonic escaped the vigilance of a stout female servant, who was on these occasions set over her, and escaping into the garden, fell, or threw herself into the fish pond, where the unhappy woman was not found till the next morning.

This melancholy accident strongly affected the mind of Miss Tonic, who after giving orders for the funeral of Mrs. Tonic, retired to Elm-place, at the entreaties of her aunt, whose proposal she could with great propriety prefer to the very kind invitations so often repeated by Mrs. Canvass, to visit the Cassino during her pleasure.

These great and sudden alterations in the family of the Tonics were soon communicated to Pagoda-lodge, by a letter from Mrs. Canvass to Mrs. Pursling. The will of the Doctor was likewise referred to; in which he had left his daughter two thirds of his

his fortune, and the remainder to Mrs. Tonic, which after her death was to devolve to Miss Tonic.

This last will of the Doctor, so atrociously unjust to the widow, from whom he had received a large fortune at his marriage with her, now completely opened the poor woman's eyes, and occasioned, no doubt, the tragic event of her death, as we have described above.

The circumstance of Miss Tonic being now a rich heiress, excited the attention of old Pursling, and in his answer to Mrs. Pursling, who had sent the letter from Bristol, he desired that she and her son would at all events come immediately to Pagoda-lodge, as he had a plan to lay immediately before her for the benefit of young Pursling.

On their arrival, he beheld with the utmost sorrow, an appearance of all his schemes being about to be frustrated. The person of young Pursling was a mere skeleton. His
asthma,

asthma, which had received some relief from the oxygenated atmosphere of his room at Bristol wells, now returned with increased virulence, and more and more convulsed his lungs, not accustomed to the quantity of azotic air, which he was now obliged to breathe, together with the other inhabitants of Pagoda-lodge.

In the midst of a long harrangue on the large fortune lately come in possession of Miss Tonic, and the consequent happiness which any man must enjoy, who was the husband of a lady thus possessed of every qualification to make the marriage state happy, the hapless youth fell into the arms of his mother, apparently a lifeless corpse.

Luckily Mrs. Pursling was more attentive to the looks and gestures of her wretched son, than to the diffuse oratory of Justice Pursling, who, inspired by his favourite topic, the happiness of a rich man, would have further prolonged his discourse, had not the circumstance

circumstance of his son's swooning, and the consequent carrying him to his chamber, stopped the father's hobby-horsical eloquence.

CHAP. XLIII.

NEAR a year previous to these melancholy prospects that clouded Pagoda-lodge, young Canvass was busily employed at Lincoln's Inn, in the study of the law. As Captain Canvass had frequently told him, that he had appointed him heir to all his possessions, the young man considered with prudence his future destination.

The character of an English country gentleman of two thousand pounds per annum, appeared to him capable of much public utility and individual respect. The talents
of

of young Canvass had been prov'd of no common excellency during the short time he was in the navy ; and the possession of talents is generally incompatible with indolence.

He imparted his plan of entering himself at one of the Inns of Court, in order to qualify himself for the very useful office of a Justice, and soon persuaded the old gentleman and his mother, to suffer his absence, by his rational arguments on the subject.

As in all matters, example is more impressive than any thing we can say, young Canvass mentioned the opposite characters of two neighbouring Justices, Mr. Selden and 'Squire Pursling. The former throwing a sudden light on the most intricate matters, and the latter obscuring circumstances of the clearest evidence.

Inspired with the hopes of rendering himself of use to the community, he applied himself diligently and exclusively to that
part

part of the law which relates to a Justice of Peace. This employment did not exclude him from the enjoyment of polite literature in his moments of leisure, which he was very unwilling to give to the clubs of lawyers, where in mock combats they sharpen their talents for real speeches, which may sometimes perhaps be of use to them in Westminster-Hall. As he did not mean to attend the Bar, he stood not in need of these very ingenious and useful rehearsals of sentiment, enunciation and oratory.

During one vacation, which he passed at the Cassino, an old aunt of Capt. Canvass was on a visit there. The old lady, though turned of seventy, was fond of dress and admiration; and flattery in any quantity was agreeable to the lady's ear. Her feelings had not yet determined the maximum. She was a maiden, without any of the ill nature or spleen which too generally attend on ancient damsels: The ungathered rose of virginity with her had ever flourished without thorns.

thorns. Young Canvass had the basis of good manners, an excellent heart, and an amiable temper. The old lady and the young lawyer were intimate friends : She called him her Don Bellianis, of Greece ; and he styled her, from the vivacity of her manner, Lady Evergreen.

The old lady's heart was completely lost, when young Canvass presented her one morning with the following copy of verses.— They were occasioned by an enormous bouquet which the old lady had displayed at dinner the day before. The late perusal of the highly polished and fantastical poem of Dr. Darwin was, to use the phrase of the chymists, the basis of this compliment.

Time-mocking fair, if right I ween,
Dan Darwin's rhymes are seldom seen
By prudent maiden aunts ;
Such magic is there in his book,
That many a nymph and swain might look
With envy on his plants.

Whilst

Think, whilst on Westley's hymns you pore,
Or, if Saint Baxter please you more,
What these sweet rogues are doing ;
The pert jonquil, the modest rose,
Now both beneath your virgin nose
Their paramours are wooing.

These pretty wantons cast aside ;
Dear lady much it hurts my pride,
And gives your poet pain ;
That these vile plants your bosom fill,
And there can act their wicked will,
Where I have try'd in vain.

CHAP. XLIV.

THIS kind of personal flattery is observed to be most agreeable to every one at a certain time of life. It was said of Madame L'Enclos, that the power of her charms was not extinguished at eighty : Lady Evergreen was many years short of that period ; and the gallant verses of young Canvass, recited in our last chapter, delighted the old maiden far more than dry and abstract reasoning would admit to be possible. She shewed these verses to all her acquaintance, and young Canvass was considered as a poet among all his friends.

Whether

Whether people in general mistake a versifier for a poet, or whether they confer the title by courtesy on any one who scribbles a few verses on his mistress's eyebrow, or whether the world is very willing to give away an appellation on which they set themselves a very little value, it is certain, that young Canvass's poetical fame was soon blazed abroad.

Various opinions, according to varieties of minds, were occasioned by this report: Justices Pursling, Drybeard, and Ponder, shook their heads, and declared that young Canvass was throwing away his time in studying the law, which was incompatible with airy flights of fancy; Mr. Selden and Capt. Canvass knew to the contrary; and being assured by eminent men in the law, that young Canvass's industry and abilities did him great credit, they were under no apprehensions of his leaving the thorny paths of the law for the more flowery regions of

B 2

poetry,

poetry, a circumstance so often related and lamented in the biography of incipient lawyers.

Once a poet and always a poet, was an axiom which young Canvass found was popular; and a few weeks after his first essay with the muses, he received a note from Mr. Deputy Visto, which entreated him (after a profusion of compliments on his eminent poetical talents) to write a few verses to be put into a grotto which he meant to turn into an hermitage.

Mr. Visto's villa was about two miles from the Cassino; young Canvass had rode frequently by it, and indulged a laugh at Mr. Deputy's artificial ruins, basons of water with ships floating on their surfaces, and withered cypresses.

As Mr. Visto and Captain Canvass were on visiting terms, young Canvass was persuaded to set down and compose some poetry for Mr. Deputy Visto's grotto, which he im -

mediately set about whilst the servant was waiting, and without invoking any muse, or even thinking about Apollo, he scribbled the following sentimental effusion.

Who would fly the dog star's rage,
In the scorching month of July,
Let him seek this hermitage,
Built so pleasantly and coolly;
Here, his furious thirst t' assuage,
Ready stands the nappy ale,
So near the house the hermitage,
The tankard never can be stale.
On those who on hot turnpikes ride,
Then shall he make reflections sage;
With ale and shade so well supply'd,
He'll bless the useful hermitage.

These *sublime* verses were immediately inscribed in letters of gold in the inside of Mr. Visto's grotto, and a painted figure of an old hermit uttered these lines from his labelled mouth to the real satisfaction of the parties who visited Mr. Visto's grounds.

In such bagatelles young Canvass passed those hours of his vacations which were not employed in the serious duties of rendering the time of his mother, and Capt. Canvass, agreeably short by his company and conversation; or were delightfully engaged by his visits to Elm Place, and his very ready attentions to a fair inhabitant of those hospitable regions.

CHAP. XLV.

IT may appear singular that neither old Pursling, or his son, should know any thing of the courtship for some time openly carried on between young Canvass and Miss Tonic; and that Mrs. Pursling did not inform her husband that such a connection did subsist, as Mrs. Pursling was well informed of this herself, through the suggestions of Mrs. Canvass.

these

These questions will be easily answered by adverting to the circumstance which was in the former part of this story hinted, that there was little intercourse carried on between Pagoda Lodge, Elm Place, and the Cassino. From the latter old Pursling absented himself, as he was unwilling to meet a woman whom he had so egregiously injured; and young Pursling was so very unlike in manners and disposition to young Canvass, that they never met together at the Cassino, or Elm Place, but on an annual visit, and then no confidential conversation arose.

Old Pursling's infirmities daily increased so fast, that he had for near two years, and about the time of Capt. Canvass coming into the Neighbourhood, absented himself from the club, so that parish news, or reports from adjacent places, were from him totally withdrawn.

Mrs. Pursling had indeed always found her husband too obstinate to believe any
E 4 thing

thing she told him, particularly if he did not chuse to believe it, as it appeared in the present case. Her mind was likewise engaged on an affair more likely to interest her than any marriage speculation which regarded her son, whose ill state of health she saw daily increasing by his continued practice of self-quackery.

Mrs. Pursling considering her son as in a rapid decline, and feeling her attachment to him daily decrease, as the whims, arrogance, and ill-humour of young Pursling were exerted, more especially towards his mother, she had nearly a year before his journey to Bristol, introduced to Pagoda Lodge a young woman by the name of Le Blanc, whom she called her niece.

Now Mrs. Pursling entertained the same idea of the term niece as Popes are said to have of the term nephew, which means, translated from papistical into protestant language, the offspring of a single man or woman.

man. This young woman she was desirous to make one of the family at Pagoda Lodge, under the title of house-keeper, and occasionally to attend on 'Squire Pursling, to assist her in warming his flannels, mulling his Madeira, and making his broth, during his long fits of the gout: These services well performed, she did not doubt would ingratiate her niece with the old 'squire, and at the probably speedy death of her son, insure her a handsome legacy, if not the heirship of Jedediah Pursling, Esq.

On this footing Miss Le Blanc, in her twenty-fifth year was taken from a situation of governess in a polite seminary near London, and appointed to one of not more ease at Pagoda Lodge.

On her first introduction to old Pursling, by Mrs. Pursling, as her orphan niece, the 'squire could not help being struck with the likeness of Miss La Blanc to Mrs. Pursling.

"Zounds," cried the 'squire, "why, wife,

this is a strong family likeness indeed ; why if she had been your own daughter the resemblance could not have been more exact ; there is your long thin lanthorn face, and your spider-like arms and legs : ” Tho’ neither the terms of the observation, nor the remark itself, was very agreeable to Mrs. Pursling, yet as she was apprised of the likeness, and well aware of the blunt method of speaking used towards her by her husband, she answered quite free from any appearance of chagrin or embarrassment, “ Yes, my dear, I should have been much surprised if what was remarked by all was not noticed by you. My sister Anne wonderfully resembled me in face and person ; she was married very young to Capt. Le Blanc, whom she attended to the East Indies, the climate of which was fatal to both, as the constitution of neither was capable of such a change.

My niece was sent over to me a year or two after I married you, and I contrived with the presents you were so good as to
make

make me during our courtship, to place her at a genteel seminary, in which in time she became a governess. Her health has been for some time declining, and as I thought during your frequent and long indispositions you would rather have the assistance of a relation than a mere stranger, I invited my niece here."

Tho' old Pursling had never before heard of this niece, nor had his wife ever mentioned, to his recollection, either her sister Anne so very like her, or Capt. L Blanc, her husband, who died in the East Indies, yet he thought the story not improbable; and the conduct of his wife not unnatural at all, in concealing and keeping in the back ground a poor relation, till circumstances put it in her way to make her of use to herself.

Pursling (for where money was not required shewed some friendly propensities) welcomed, with all the civility his general

habits would admit of, his neice to all the comforts of Pagoda Lodge.

Thus becoming an inmate, Miss La Blanc, like a good politician, began to study the various dispositions and whims of every person in the house. The two years in which she had been governess had taught her how a person in a secondary character in a family should conduct herself. To divide and govern was a maxim she easily learnt and very readily practised.

As house-keeper, she did not infringe on the perquisites of the cook, a great favourite with 'squire Pursling, nor did she interfere with the gormandising appetite of John the coachman, whose interest she saw was strong with Mrs. Pursling, who frequently commended him for the sleekness which the coach-horses always exhibited, and the brightness of his harness; tho' Miss La Blanc knew full well that he had introduced a poor man with a large family of children into the
stable

stable, and had paid him for rubbing his horses and cleaning his harness, by the remains which he could easily spare from the enormous demands which he made for his four meals a day.

By these precautions she gained the servants on her side, and then found no difficulty in governing both the master and mistress; but as she was admitted a parlour guest, she found in Harry Pursling her most insidious spy and her most inveterate foe.

The confectionary accomplishments of Miss La Blanc excited his envy and his jealousy; and he felt, like a mind truly mean and selfish, that every attention to her was a deduction from his own favour and consequence at Pagoda Lodge. Miss La Blanc soon obtained the smiles of old Pursling, by her skill in pickling cucumbers, and making strong punch; but the frequent closettings between Mrs. Pursling and her niece, roused the fury of jealousy so strong in young Pursling,

sling, that he no longer kept any bounds of decency in his words and actions; and as Miss La Blanc was always superior to young Pursling, even in the old 'squires opinion, at repartee and argument, the young man's wrath knew no bounds but those which his inability to shew it effectually prescribed to him; he fumed and fretted; she jeered and laughed.

How these animosities might have ended we cannot decide; yet most probably Miss La Blanc would have fallen a victim to the unfeeling envy of young Pursling, and been banished from Pagoda Lodge, had not his death determined it otherwise, and left to the lady the possession of the field.

Mrs. Pursling now felt her plan approaching to maturity, and took up the interests of her neice with more open and determined zeal.—The daily increasing infirmities of Pursling rendered him now an unresisting slave to female arts and officiousness.

CHAP. XLVI.

THE death of his son, which was followed by a long adieu to all the dreams of avarice and ambition in the bosom of Jedediah Pursling, Esq. brought on a fever of a dangerous nature, the consequence of his fretting over the extinction of his most favourite projects.

The unremitted assiduities of Miss La Blane, and especially the tit-bits, and the most palatable liquors, which she well knew how to prepare, seemed to restore the health and spirits of the old gentleman; and his continual praises bestowed on Miss La Blanc soon rose into a report that his wife's niece was to be the heiress to his fortune. But the lady's assiduities were of late considerably

bly diminished, in consequence of the frequent visits of the Rev. John Martingale Spavin, or Jack Spavin, as he was generally called.

Jack had been lately transplanted to the curacy of Pursling's parish, having left the University very young, and having taken to the Church, after he had nearly spent all his patrimony in seeing the world.

Mr. Spavin, the father of Jack, was a little country 'squire, who consumed two thirds of his income in keeping a groom, two hunters and a hackney, to ride to cover. At his death he left behind his small estate very much encumbered, which being sold, and the mortgages paid off, put into Jack's pocket about 1500*l*. With this sum, and retaining the groom and the two hunters, he commenced a man of the turf: He could dextrously crop the ears of a horse, descant on the make of his shoe, to the admiration of the Veterinary Society, and ride a horse
more

more hours in the day, without killing him, than any man in the kingdom of his weight and inches. Yet as the knowing ones are frequently over-reached, in the course of two years Jack lost his groom and one of his horses, and most part of his cash, between London and Newmarket. With a few hundred pounds, and his favourite mare still remaining, he very cheerfully took on him the curacy of the parish in which Pagoda-lodge was situated. At his first entrance on his office, it was a matter of great dispute which was thinnest, Jack or his horse,

“ For leane was his horse as any rake
And he was not right fat I undertake.”

This mirthful representation of a poet in the old bard, would not have given too ludicrous an account of the parson and his steed.

Falling

Falling into a rich and hospitable neighbourhood, the biped and the quadruped were considerably improved in appearance, after a very short time.—Spavin's afternoons were passed at the sumptuous tables of his opulent neighbours; and his mornings were altogether taken up by keeping his leather buckskin breeches without a speck, and the bit of his bridle and his stirrups free from rust and dirt.

As the present inhabitants of Pagoda-lodge were often the topic of conversation at the tables which Spavin frequented, he was often excited by the company present to try his luck with Miss La Blanc, whom they represented as the heiress apparent of old Pursling's property. These speeches, although perhaps for the most part uttered in joke, and in allusion to his being a bachelor, yet made a strong and uniform impression on the mind of Spavin. He therefore paid the most ready obedience to the invitations of Mrs. Pursling to Pagoda-lodge, which

which he had omitted to attend to during the life time of Harry, whom he always considered as a silly fellow, who knew nothing of a horse, and could not bear the smell of a stable.

Notwithstanding the general contempt in which he held Harry Pursling, he hated him still more than he despised him; for Pursling had been very assiduous in propagating the stories of Spavin's losses at Newmarket, and had once the malice to ask him, before a large company, whether his favourite mare was not broken winded.

These were injuries against which the general apathy of Spavin's character could not hold out. He therefore, during young Pursling's life, was seldom at Pagoda-lodge;—after that event his visits were long and frequent.

Jack Spavin, by a long usage of a life of dependance, had learnt a perennial flow of bows,

bows, smiles, and civil speeches, whenever his interest prompted him to exhibit these very popular talents.

On no subject but horses had Spavin exercised a single serious thought, and his uniform submission to the opinions of others, cost him no struggle, and produced no hesitation. When only Mrs. Pursling and Miss La Blanc were at the table, Spavin then ventured to indulge himself in eloquence unusual to him when in the society of men. On virtue, philanthropy and sensibility he dis-
canted with much of the fluency, and with all the sincerity of modern Anglo-gallic-philosophers. But with a heart alive to the most rigid sentiments of '*moral integrity*,' he had left unpaid several debts of his late father, substantiated by the claims of very indigent and honest persons; and with a sensibility too tender for the common occurrences of life, he had left an aged mother to subsist on the charity of her more distant relations.

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As these circumstances occurred in a distant county, Spavin was in no fear of these facts being opposed to his sentimental effusions. At other times, when his confidence was encreased by the kind attention of the ladies to his discourses, he told of his intimate acquaintance with many of the nobility, contracted at the University; and pathetically deplored his want of patronage and preferment, Miss La Blanc, like Desdemona, exclaim'd,

“ In faith ’twas strange, ’twas passing strange,

’Twas pitiful, ’twas wondrous pitiful :

She wish’d she had not heard it ; yet she wish’d

That heav’n had made her such a man.”

The person indeed of Spavin was tall and vigorous; perpetual exercise and a total want of thought had communicated an uncommon vivacity to his countenance, and sprightliness to his demeanour. Whilst his person and eloquence won the heart of the tender La Blanc, his unremitted attentions,
and

and his unqualified flattery, gained the good will of Mrs. Pursling, whose regularity in her visits to the church became more exemplary than usual.

These long conversations at the tea table, after old Pursling had left it, were silently working mischief to the interests of Miss La Blanc, and the time when his gruel should be administered by the fair and skillful hand of his neice, was not unfrequently neglected by the lady, who was more agreeably employed in hearing Spavin's tales of College life, and of his successes at Newmarket against the most knowing veterans of the turf.

That Love is blind, is a true axiom ; for Miss La Blank never perceived the dark clouds gathering in the face of old Pursling, when her hour of attendance was exceeded or neglected, till big words burst from the indignant Pursling, and frequent sneers, of no very delicate import either to the purity of La Blanc's passion, or her ecclesiastical lover's

ver's attachment, warned Miss La Blanc of the danger of remitting her devoirs to a peevish, tyrannical, and opulent invalid.

CHAP. XLVII.

THE illness of Pursling visibly grew worse : His peevishness of course increased, and the inattentions of Miss La Blanc appeared to him more palpable, and beyond the power of the most specious excuse.— Had Pursling felt the greatest partiality for Miss La Blanc at this time, and even approved of her attachment to Jack Spavin, yet men allow little for the influence of passions by which they themselves are no longer affected, and rather treat it as a chimera, or an affectation.

Mrs.

Mrs. Pursling saw the conduct of her niece with great vexation ; but whether that love, or the shadow of it, remains for a greater period in the minds of women, than it does in those of men ; or, whether they have more liberal sentiments on subjects by which they cease to be attracted, we will not determine ; or whether they are more prone to match-making ;—but be these conjectures as they may, Mrs. Pursling certainly made many allowances for Miss La Blanc being in love, and though, she was just then in need of her attendances, she excus'd all her neglect.

But as she was convinced, from a pretty exact observation of Pursling's character, that nothing but a fear of a certain and speedy dissolution, would make Pursling think of parting with his property, or any other motive incline him to make a will, she considered any decline of Miss La Blanc's good graces in the mind of Pursling would at this time be very dangerous.

Without

Without communicating these apprehensions to her neice, she held a very serious conference with Jack Spavin on the subject of absenting himself from Pagoda-lodge during the worst parts of the illness of old Pursling, which to all appearance promised to be the last.

To these representations of Mrs. Pursling, who was no orator, Jack Spavin, who was on all occasions, as on this also, become very profuse of his tropes and metaphors. Whether this axiom holds out good in other cases, is doubtful; it is certain, however, that on the subject of love a man can talk better, or at least more fluently, when not under the influence of that passion, which was precisely Mr. Spavin's case.

As we do really in our hearts think that a fine person, regular features, and a pair of sparkling eyes, do form very essential ingredients in the composition of love, practically considered, we, without hesitation, do

pronounce that Mr. Spavin was not wounded by the blind boy from any of those quarters.

Miss La Blanc, indeed, was tall, but so thin that all proportion was lost: Her eyes, indeed, were large, but there was no speculation in them more than in those of a dead mackarel; and her motion was like that of a pair of tongs, could we imagine those utensils taught to walk by the ingenious Mr. Merlin. Nor was her voice attuned by the gamut of love under the direction of the Graces: when she sung at her harpsichord, the hearer would have supposed that it was an overture in a serenade of two amorous cats.

The idea of her being Pursling's heir, made Spavin forget the uncouthness of her person, and the preciseness of her manner, which she had contracted whilst she was a governess. When Mrs. Pursling, who, like a feeble orator, had at last urged the only point to the purpose, which was, that if he continued his visits, Miss La Blanc would
lose

lose the favour of her uncle, Spavin gave way to the necessity of the case, and retired with a melancholy countenance, the horrors of which were faithfully recorded by Mrs. Pursling to Miss La Blanc, and properly sympathized with by the tender damsel.—Nor can Spavin be accused of hypocrisy in expressing sorrow for this separation, the limits of which were uncertain, and might be at some considerable distance.

The two lovers would excite at this separation, the various sympathy of different tempers. One person might lament the dreary hours of Miss La Blanc, during the absence of him whom her heart acknowledged as its lord : Another might enter into the sorrows of poor Spavin, who now frequently, upon compulsion, lived, or rather starved, at his own lodgings.

Miss La Blanc was, however, fast recovering the former influence over old Pursling,

ling, when a letter fell into his hands, directed to his wife : As the hand appeared to be that of a man, and unknown to Pursling, he, who always behaved like a sullen tyrant, or what he called being master in his own house, broke it open without any check of delicacy or honour. It is said ' listeners hear no good of themselves ;' and Pursling found the proverb true on the present occasion.—The contents of the letter were as follows :

My dearest Fanny,

" I was glad to hear, that since the Duke has taken a trip to the Continent, and left us all in the lurch, that you have taken our girl from the school, and put her in a good place at Pagoda-lodge, and called her your niece, and given her a foreign name. Your's or mine might have put crotchets into your husband's head. The old fool now, since his son is dead, may make her his heiress : In that case, you know, as I am her father, she will come and live with me, and you
and

and I may then be married, according to law, as you know I am your husband according to nature.

Your loving Sweetheart,

JOHN CRIP.

P. S. "My vixen of a wife, who was related to Dr. Tonic, is dead, or I should soon have hanged myself. We kept an alehouse at the west end of the town, but the lords' servants pay just like their masters, I suppose, and so I was soon obliged to stop tap, and I believe a jail is before me, unless you can send me some cash immediately, directed for me at the sign of the Knave of Clubs, Hackney.

In the fit of fury that the perusal of this letter produced in the mind of Pursling, in his present state of debility, he thought of nothing but revenge on his wife according to the utmost rigour of the law; but in all his law proceedings he asked the advice of his respectable neighbour Mr. Selden, who,

on receiving a note, written in great confusion of terms, immediately waited on the writer, and a very long and close conference took place.

The effect of this secret debate soon operated on the feelings of all the family. Mrs. Pursling found that her husband's conduct, from being phlegmatic and inattentive, was marked with speeches which shewed a contempt of her, and a continued line of demeanour that intimated strongly, at different times disregard and indignation.

To Miss La Blanc his language was not less offensive : Sometimes he called her very significantly his dear *niece* ; sometimes with a broad grin he called her a *chip* of the old block ; at others when he combined the name and idea of parson Spavin with her, he expressed a wonder, in no very gentle terms, that two beggars should think of marrying.

Fram

From all these hints aggregately collected, the ladies in their cabinet counsels formed the most melancholy conjectures and the most unpleasant inferences: Miss La Blanc perceived that her uncle was not very easily to be pleased; and Mrs. Pursling more than supposed from her husband's varied mode of brutality, and his late conferences with Mr. Selden, with whom he was in a sociable way little acquainted, that something very uncommon had happened.

During this perturbed state of the inhabitants of Pagoda Lodge, old Pursling left its pleasures and its pains very suddenly, by a fit of the gout settling in his stomach.

CHAP. XLVIII.

A Melancholy fortnight followed the death and preceded the burial of old Pursling, which was rendered more so by a fruitless search after the will of the deceased, though made very diligently by Miss La Blanc and Mrs. Pursling. Their fears were now much increased, as it appeared probable that no will had been made; and as most part of Pursling's property was real, the ladies were hourly alarmed at the idea of the heir at law appearing.

A day or two before the burial of old Pursling, the names of Capt. Canvass and Mr. Selden were announced; on their entrance into the parlour, they discovered a person of very mean and shabby appearance, and very humble demeanour, who seemed by his

his dejected countenance, and his endeavour to proceed in his discourse, to have made some interesting petition to the ladies, but in vain. He strongly resembled old Pursling in the face, though he wanted the portly person and the air of consequence which marked his deceased relation.

Frank Pursling was a country shop-keeper in the town of — , and he could boast of furnishing the dead and the living with every respective article of accommodation. He was a linen and woollen draper, a tallow-chandler, a grocer, and an undertaker. In the last capacity he had called at Pagoda Lodge for a black job as he termed it.

He was a very near relation to old Pursling, though not even known to him by sight, but as the poor are more likely to know the rich than the latter to be acquainted with the former, Frank very well knew his relationship to the opulent possessor of Pagoda Lodge.

On the strength of this connection, having from his usual custom of hunting for deaths in the newspapers, discovered that of old Pursling; he immediately set forward to ride thirty miles to wait on the disconsolate widow, and offer himself with many bows and smiles to undertake the funeral. He took the liberty he said, as he was nearly related to the deceased, to solicit the honour of interring him; and though he was a country shop-keeper, he did not doubt of acquitting himself on this occasion in the most fashionable manner, and of giving the most entire satisfaction to all parties..

The strong family likeness which struck Mrs. Pursling, put her mind out of all doubt of Frank's relationship to her late husband, yet she answered with a mixture of pride and solemn grief, that on the present sad occasion she could not give the preference to any relation, but should merely consider how the funeral might be executed in the best manner, most likely to express her regard for
the

the deceased, and to pay the highest compliment to his memory, by sparing no expence, and procuring the most genteel undertaker that could be found in London.

The term genteel was uttered with a manifest reference to the shabby appearance of Frank Pursling; and on the entrance of Captain Canvass and Mr. Selden, the ladies seemed very desirous of ridding themselves of their humble companion: Frank was preparing to harangue on the genteel assortment of palls, patent coffins, &c. when his mouth was stopped by Mrs. Pursling, who desired the servant to take that *bonest* man into the kitchen, and to give him some cold meat, as he must be very tired, and it might be past his usual time of dinner.

Frank, though hungry, felt all the pride and indignation of a poor relation thus treated, and leaving the ladies with much indignation and disgust, he shut the door after him with a very forcible hand.

On his quitting the room, Mr. Selden approached the ladies and condoled them on their late loss. "I have often lamented Mr. Selden," replied Mrs. Pursling, "that the dear and worthy man whom I have so lately lost was so little of a visitor at Elm Place, or he would have undoubtedly received much pleasure and advantage from the acquaintance of Mr. Selden, and I should have been proud of an intimacy with Mrs. Selden."

To these compliments Mr. Selden answered, "that the late Mr. Pursling, and especially for some months previous to his death, had been very communicative to him, and very confidential in disclosing all the secrets of his life and family, and"—"no doubt," exclaimed Mrs. Pursling, interrupting him, "the knowledge of where he has deposited his will, or whether indeed he made any, which I much doubt, and apprehend was probably confided to you."

Mr.

Mr. Selden answered very calmly to these anxious queries, "that to dissipate any unpleasant suspense with regard to a matter of such importance to her, he and his friend Capt. Canvass had waited on her as soon as possible with the will, which was deposited in his hands by Mr. Pursling some months previous to his death; and he had likewise left in his hands other documents appertaining to family secrets, which would explain the reasons which actuated him to make the will in the manner which he had done."

This preamble of Mr. Selden to his production of the will, occasioned some very strong nervous palpitations in the bosom of Mrs. Pursling, and drove the little colour which was wont to reside in the cheeks of Miss La Blanc from its place of abode.

"Capt. Canvass," continued Mr. Selden, "and his son are joint executors with me in the will, and if you will give me leave, I will read it to you now, or will send you an attested

tested copy of it to-morrow. The original one, which I have now in my hands, is witnessed by Capt. Canvass, his son, and myself."

The impatience of the ladies broke out suddenly, and they desired with as much composure as possible that the will might immediately be read. The contents were few and shortly expressed: The bulk of his fortune was given to young Canvass, with a considerable annuity to Mrs. Canvass for her life; the remaining twenty thousand pounds were given to Mr. Frank Pursling, shop-keeper, in the town of —, and his heirs for ever, provided they retained the name of Pursling.

The total silence of this will with regard to Mrs. Pursling and Miss La Blanc, her niece, threw the ladies into the utmost consternation, and soon after into hysteric fits. The violent ringing of the bell in consequence of this accident, brought all the servants,

vants, together with Frank Pursling, into the room.—The latter was just preparing to mount his horse and leave Pagoda Lodge, with no very pleasant recollection of his reception there; as he had hoped, that though during the life-time of old Pursling, he should be prevented by the pride of riches from reaping any benefit from his relationship, yet at his death he expected some emolument in his own way.

As both the ladies were in a downright fit of fainting, and there was no affectation in their grief, the servants were wisely employed in conveying with great speed and decorum the ladies from the room, in which toil they could not with propriety be assisted by the gentlemen, though Frank Pursling's aid was readily offered and haughtily rejected, and with frowns by the lady's maid;—for preparing them also for his patent coffins ran in Frank's head, when he saw their limbs extended and their faces pale as death.

CHAP. XLIX.

FRANK Pursling, who now thought from this accident that more business was falling to him in his own way, began to rub his hands and look very sharply about, and seeing a paper still unfolded in the hands of one of the gentlemen, he approached towards him, and guessed it was the will of old Pursling, the reading of which had produced such funereal effects, "my name, your honour," he exclaimed, "is Pursling; I fear, sir, my cousin the old gentleman has made an odd kind of a will; I fear so, as it does not appear to have pleased madam or the young lady mightily, and I suppose we shall have another funeral soon. I myself, tho' a brother's child, and have lived within thirty miles

miles of the old gentleman for these twenty years, never saw or heard from him, and so I suppose he did not know any thing of me, though my name is Pursling."

"What is your christian name," replied Mr. Selden; "Frank, please your honour, which was the name too of my father, who kept a little snuff-shop in the same town I now live. He had some very distant relations in the county of N——, who, good folks, left as I have understood a nation deal of money to the old gentleman here, because he was growing rich and was not likely to want it.

My father was very needy, and in no thriving trade, and so they would give him no assistance.—Poor man, he put me to a genteeler shop than his own, to the trade of which I succeeded by marrying the young widow of my predecessor, who was an old man, and I may say an old fool, for at sixty he married a young woman of nineteen, and

soon

soon died, as the doctor had foretold and forewarned him.

He left no family, but I soon supplied this deficiency, and in the course of twenty years my family has increased to twelve children, and they are all alive: But as the departments of my business are various, I hope to find places for all of them, male and female; for Frank Pursling is known many miles round for the variety of his wares and the cheapness of his sale, and his patience towards his creditors.—Here, sir, is my card, and I should be glad to serve you and that gentleman with as genteel goods as any in London.”

Mr. Selden, on reading the card which Frank Pursling had put into his hands, in return presented him old Pursling's will, adding, “perhaps, Mr. Pursling, when you have read that will, you may not think it quite so odd as you just now suspected it to be.”

Frank

Frank, in the perusal of this short but very valuable manuscript, sometimes danc'd about the room, sometimes snapped his fingers and laugh'd aloud: At length assuming a grave and deliberate countenance, "Now," says he, "this old cousin of mine (I shall not mention this proud madam here, who by the bye is no better than needs must) would never have done any good to me and my family during his life-time, for the sake of the name forsooth, has left me twenty thousand pounds, and to my heirs for ever, provided they bear the name of Pursling; egad the old boy shall not be disappointed; no, no, that won't wear out soon, for I look upon it my seven boys are very capable of stocking a whole county with Purslings that shall last for ever, for they are all in excellent health, rise early, retire to bed soon, and are always employed, so that they are not likely to fall in love, but will no doubt make very advantageous matches: And as for my wife Kate," —

The

The volubility of Frank Pursling was increasing at this period, on which Mr. Selden and Capt. Canvass, both averse to long harangues from a mere stranger on family matters, rose up, wished Mr. Pursling joy of his legacy, and hop'd he would find his family well on his return, and perfectly satisfied with his morning's call.

On their way home Mr. Selden and Capt. Canvass conferred about the best method of communicating the private letters and other secret papers which Mr. Selden had in his possession, and which were entrusted to him by the late Mr. Pursling, with a request, that at his death these papers should be given to his wife, Mrs. Pursling, with a copy of his last will.

With the contents of the letter from Chip, the former sweetheart of Mrs. Pursling, the reader is already acquainted: The other papers referred to private intelligence which he had picked up at a club one evening soon after

after he had permitted Miss La Blanc to be an inmate at Pagoda Lodge.

An exciseman who had lived formerly in the same street with the Duke of —, and was well acquainted with Mr. Chip, the head butler to his grace, having *retired* from business by the *command* of his superiors, now lived in old Pursling's parish, and had introduced himself to the club under the character of a person who had resigned a considerable place in the customs, because of his differing very materially and widely from the ministry at a Westminster election; for as he considered himself as a true patriot, he could therefore never consider that a premier could act either with common sense or common honesty. His dress was mean, his manner overbearing, and his opinion of his own talents very much overated.

In a conversation at the club, old Pursling and this warm patriot having a dispute late in the evening about the superiority of the
London

London tavern over all others, which was strenuously maintained by Pursling, in the beard of his anti-ministerial antagonist.—The latter, with a coarseness of language and a contumelious method of treating his opponent with scorn, so raised the bile of the opulent Pursling, that he called the ci-devant exciseman a low and impudent blackguard.

Truths must not be told at all times ; the patriot was very much intoxicated, and not knowing how to vindicate his own character he attacked Mrs. Pursling's, and began an history of Pursling's marriage with Miss Lavender, and entered deeply into the private anecdotes concerning the birth and education of Miss La Blanc. Fortunately the hour was late, and no one remained in the room but old Pursling and his communicative acquaintance.

Pursling soon left the room, and on his return home determined to sift this matter to the bottom ; but as his friend the patriot
soon

soon left that part of the country, and the matter subsided at length in his own mind, and all the disagreeable reflection began to disappear, his thoughts were gradually retreating from the subject, when they were again reduced to a state of fermentation by the arrival of the above-mentioned letter from Chip to his wife, the contents of which he had possessed himself of in the dishonourable manner of interception.

Though Mr. Selden, by his sober and rational advice, had persuaded him not to break out on the occasion into any violent acts against his wife, or Miss La Blanc, yet the determination of revenging himself on them both in his will never slept a moment in his bosom.

The perturbation which these thoughts occasioned, and the ill state of health which he laboured under at the time of his perusing the above letter, kept up his indignation, and eventually put an end to his life a very
little

little time after the day in which he had consigned the above-mentioned papers to the hands of Mr. Selden; whom, together with Capt. Canvass and his adopted son, he had appointed executors to his will.

Those gentlemen in their return from Pagoda Lodge, determined to send a copy of old Pursling's will, and the papers explanatory of it, to Mrs. Pursling, a few days after this visit, which was accordingly done, and a kind enquiry into the state of health and spirits of both the ladies attended these papers.

CHAP.

CHAP. L.

THE ladies still continued in that melancholy state of mind, in which a violent disaster leaves the heart some days after the first attack. Too much overcome by the late pressure to turn their thoughts to their future designs and views, they remained oppressed by a degree of torpor little short of idiotism.

This sad state was broken in upon by an arrival of the papers mentioned in the last chapter.—On perusing the will and the letter adjoined, the wretched condition of Mrs. Pursling's feelings cannot easily be described. That the misconduct of her former life should now overtake her so unexpectedly, and so undeservedly in some measure, gave an

additional poignancy to her grief; which was encreased by her unwillingness to communicate to Miss La Blanc the secret of her former life, or the contents of the letter written by Mr. Chip, and the comments of her late husband on this epistle, and the various reports which he had heard in confirmation of Mr. Chip's insinuations.

It is said, that sorrow seldom comes singly; for a few minutes after the receipt of the above packet, a letter arrived, directed to Mrs. Pursling. At this moment Miss La Blanc, who was absent from the parlour at the arrival of the packet from Mr. Selden's, now came in; Mrs. Pursling perceiving it was the hand-writing of Spavin, immediately read it aloud to the anxious Miss La Blanc, whose eyes had caught the characters of the superscription, as soon as their large orbits rolled that way.—The contents were as follow:

“ The

"The Rev. Mr. John Martingale Spavin presents his compliments of condolance to Mrs. Pursling on the late sad event ; and is sorry that an engagement at a considerable distance, will prevent him from expressing to her his sorrow in person."

October, 17—

The sensibility of Miss La Blanc was shockingly wounded by the total silence of Mr. Spavin with regard to herself, and uttering the word ' monster ! ' with great energy, burst out into a flood of tears.

Mrs. Pursling felt due indignation at this cold and evasive note of Spavin's, and threw it, with many marks of disgust, into the fire.

Spavin, who had told Miss La Blanc his promise to absent himself from Pagoda-lodge, during the illness of old Pursling, by the advice of Mrs. Pursling, and that he was going down into Devonshire, to see his
C 2 friend,

friend, Lord John Axletree, never moved from the spot, but remaining in the village, gathered every information of the death and will of old Pursling from one of the servants of Pagoda-lodge.

The circumstances which regarded Miss La Blanc and Mrs. Pursling, and their necessity of quitting Pagoda-lodge were announced, though with some mistakes, pretty accurately and very diffusely. To circulate unpleasant news seems the enjoyment of vulgar minds ; though

“ Misery has sure a mournful right
To pity, even to reverence.”——

Jack Spavin, who always speculated on a marriage with Miss La Blanc, as the means of encreasing his stud, and renewing his visits to Newmarket, received the news of these melancholy circumstances overwhelming the ladies, his friends at Pagoda-lodge, with the same sensations which he would
have

have felt had he heard of a favourite horse of his own running the wrong side of the post.

As he possessed one of those fortunate minds and constitutions, on which no pressure remains long, he soon recovered from this bad speculation, and wrote an adieu to the ladies and his future hopes in the cool billet which we have laid before the reader in the beginning of this chapter.

A few days after this note from Spavin, a second letter arrived for Mrs. Pursling: It was from Mr. Chip, expressing his surprize that the former remained unanswered, and informing her that he was then in jail for a very considerable sum, and had no hope of ever regaining his liberty but by her pecuniary assistance. The latter part of his letter was filled with violent protestations of unaltered affection, and all those sweet and sugar-candy words which men of gallantry

too frequently find successful when addressed to the fair and gentle sex.

On the mind of Mrs. Pursling the letter had an effect which the writer was very far from suspecting :—His situation gave her great pleasure, as it promised that both her and her daughter, Miss La Blanc, would never be further troubled with him, either in person or by letter, which was truly foreseen, as his death happened soon after.

This morning was filled with business ;—and whilst Miss La Blanc and Mrs. Pursling, the former still holding Spavin's note in her hand, and the latter at intervals perusing Mr. Chip's epistle, and uttering the words detested wretch and traitor, which were with equal emphasis returned by Miss La Blanc, the name of Mrs. Canvass was announced.

As Mrs. Canvass and Mrs. Pursling were always on an intimate footing, she was immediately

mediately admitted. As Mrs. Canvass had always behaved to both the ladies with great civility and delicacy, the hopes of telling, or rather repeating her griefs, to Mrs. Canvass, was a balsamic joy to the wounded spirit of Mrs. Pursling.

Mrs. Canvass approached the ladies with a smile of benevolence, and desiring Miss La Blanc to read the note which she gave her aloud, she seated herself with great complacency in a further corner of the room:—The paper contained very comfortable news:

I promise to pay to Mrs. Pursling and Miss La Blanc, during their natural lives, or the survivor of them, the sum of two hundred pounds per annum.

CHARLES CANVASS.

Witnesses { MARY CANVASS.
FRED. CANVASS.
JOHN SELDEN.

Then quitting the room with a smile and a nod of kindness, Mrs. Canvass left the ladies to their good fortune.

On the following day Mrs. Pursling proposed to her neice to set off in a fortnight to some small town in the North, where she had relations, and where they could live decently and respectably on this income. Miss La Blanc was as willing as Mrs. Pursling to quit Pagoda-lodge ; and they bid adieu to the false hopes and visionary joys of that now melancholy scene.

But good, like bad fortune, acts not by halves : The morning before they set out for the North. Mrs. Pursling received a letter from Mr. Selden, (one of the sons of old Selden, an attorney in —— street, London) informing her that he was lately appointed steward to the Duke of ——, successor to the duke his uncle, of —— square ; and that among the debts of the late duke, one to the amount of 3000l. was due to her late husband, and would be paid into a banker's hands for her use.

The

This Mrs. Pursling took possession of, as this sum was not mentioned in the will of old Pursling, who had quite given up the hope of ever regaining it.—Mrs. Pursling and Miss La Blanc, after sending a letter to Mrs. Canvass, and enclosing one to young Canvass, thanking him with much gratitude for his pecuniary assistance, set off into the North, and settled soon to their great comfort and ease.

Of duplicity and fraud Mrs. Pursling had now seen the disadvantages ; and her precepts to her daughter for her future conduct were as prudent as her own behaviour became exemplary.

CHAP. LI.

A Few days after the departure of Mrs. Pursling, and Miss La Blanc for the North, the marriage of young Canvass and Harriot Tonic was celebrated, after a courtship as happy as two very delicate and very warm and sincere dispositions could make it ; and how happy that is no words can express.

Possession of Pagoda-lodge was soon taken by these young people ; improvements therein soon took place ; for alterations by persons of taste may be truly so called.—The Chinese bridges were destroyed ; and the small and shallow rill, now no longer distorted and reluctantly expanded before the parlour

parlour windows, was again permitted to fall into its natural bed, and to wind itself with true simplicity into the adjacent meadow, which had long deplored its absence. The leaden statues, which long seemed to have shivered in the northern breeze, were now all melted, and applied to the restoration of neglected spouts, or to repair the chasms which the windows, Gothicised by the late owner, in many places exhibited.

A certain place of temporary retirement no longer usurp'd the dignity of a Gothic church. The steeple was removed; the lattice windows were concealed by a fresh white-washing, and its approach partly hid by shrubs of ample foliage. A smooth and level lawn, flanked by two gravel walks, which in summer afforded a cool and shady promenade, and kept off the harsh winds of the winter, appeared to young Canvass the only admissible improvements on so narrow a spot.

But the greatest alteration which took place at Pagoda-lodge, was at the suggestion of his amiable wife.

“ You will have quite a palace to put your plants in, my dear,” said Charles Canvass, whilst he was conducting her towards the greenhouse, which stood at some distance from the house, and had been a barn.

On entering it they found several forms arranged in great order, and painted green, on which stood a few wither'd plants that seemed to present no appearance of care and superintendance ; but to have

“ Breath'd their sweetness in the desert air.”

Mrs. Canvass stood for some time silent ; at length breaking from her reverie, and taking hold of the hand of her husband, she looked with tender inquisitiveness into his face :

“ I

“ I have thought, my dear, that this great room might be turned to a more useful purpose than that to which it has hitherto been applied.”

“ Why,” replied Canvass, with a laugh, “ I think, my sweet woman, that may easily be; for the old citizen seems indeed to have thought a greenhouse filled with exotics to be a genteel appendix to a rich man’s mansion; but I suppose his ignorance and his avarice combined to keep this large room free from such expensive inhabitants.”

“ I am afraid mine would be thought to be more expensive lodgers,” replied Mrs. Canvass, “ but as I have the scheme much at heart, I should not like to meet your disapprobation of it.”

Canvass perceiving her hesitation, exclaimed with great earnestness, “ My love, any plan which will give you pleasure and satisfaction, I am sure must, and will, meet
not

not only my consent, but my approbation and applause."

"I mean," says Mrs. Canvass, "as it is an airy room, and stands towards this meadow, which is our own, to transform this greenhouse into a school. I have in my eye the widow of the late clergyman of this parish, who is very poor and very discreet, and ingenious and active. This person I mean to appoint as governess; to allow her a comfortable salary, and clothe the female children of the parish yearly out of my own purse."

"I admire your plan very much," replied Charles, "and you shall see that I almost envy your idea, and shall not leave all the execution of it to yourself. I am determined to bear all the expence myself, and your ladyship shall have all the trouble of managing this academy; which, though they consist of girls only, will, I think, be sufficient employment for your leisure hours."

Both

Both agreeing to this amicable compromise, after some friendly and jocose litigation, they returned toward the house, as it was near dinner time. For the first time during their marriage, their conversation at table, on both sides, was sparing, and their attention to the dainties of the table languid. The benevolent scheme which agitated the minds of each, inspired both with sensations too pleasurable and refined to admit any grosser appetites to interrupt their mental enjoyments.

Charles Canvass, though he was no philosopher, or modern philanthropist, had a heart warm and alive to the happiness of all around him.—His wife, though she had not written one sonnet on humanity, nor composed an ode to sensibility, or even perused one, yet knew the luxury of doing good, and the utility of practising benevolence.

The

The author of the Seasons was a true philanthropist, and a great favorite of Mrs. Canvass, and she had read in Coriolanus :

——— “ Philosophy consists not
In airy schemes and idle speculations ;
The rule and conduct of all social life
Is her great province.”

CHAP. LII.

WHILST Mrs. Canvass passed many days, subsequent to the preceding negotiation, with her husband, in the delightful contemplation of conducting this charity school, Charles was employed in putting workmen into the green house, to effect this metamorphose.

Little alteration was indeed wanting :—A ceiling made the room, with the aid of a chimney,

chimney, very comfortable ; and the entrance being changed and placed towards the meadow, instead of being opposite the house, no inconvenience could arise from this adjacent seminary to the inhabitants of Pagoda-lodge.

Charles likewise solicited the advice of the good folks at the Cassino and Elm-place, to chuse out proper subjects to fill the school.—All these matters were soon adjusted by the care and prudence of the Seldens, and Capt. Canvass and his wife.

Both these families were much delighted with the young couple employing superfluous wealth on charitable deeds, and gave them the fullest encouragements in all their designs.

That the children were not always sufficiently tractable ; that the governess was not always uniformly attentive to their various dispositions ; and that the parents were very frequently

frequently discontented, querulous, and ungrateful, it will not be paradoxical to assert, or very difficult to believe.

These unexpected difficulties and embarrassments neither cooled the benevolence, nor slackened the generosity of this amiable couple to their favourite charge: These difficulties and embarrassments, indeed, endeared them to each other, by exhibiting more fully their respective virtues.

Whilst they were employed thus usefully, a letter arrived, written by the hand of Mrs. Pursling: This epistle repeated her former grateful acknowledgments for the kindness of the Canvasses, described the comforts of her present situation, and dwelt long on the returning health and spirits of Miss LaBlanc; which joyful circumstance was followed by a pretty long narration of the attention of the Rev. J. Spavin to her niece in the life-time of old Pursling, and his abrupt dereliction of her at his decease; the confession of her
niece's

neice's former attachment to him, and present tranquillity ; which together with many vehement execrations of Mrs. Pursling on this recreant knight, concluded the epistle.

The ungenerous conduct of Jack Spavin was the topic of conversation at the Cassino that day after dinner ; and the inhabitants of Pagoda Lodge, of the Cassino, and Elm Place, declared war against the said Jack Spavin, and entered into firm resolutions of excluding him from their houses. This proceeding they considered as due to his late behaviour to Miss La Blanc, and were determined uniformly to persist in it.

“ Heaven may forgive a crime to penitence,
For Heaven can judge if penitence be true :
But man, who knows not hearts, should make examples,
Which, like a warning-piece, must be shot off,
To fright the rest from crimes.”

Mr. Spavin soon found the sad effects of the combination of those respectable families
who

who shut their doors against him. However obtuse Mr. Spavin's feelings were on this occasion, yet that monitor within his own bosom, with a still silent, yet with a very audible voice, informed him, that his conduct to Miss La Blanc, since old Pursling's decease was unworthy of a man; nor did he hesitate to think that his present banishment from the hospitable tables of his former friends had any other foundation than the discovery of this unjustifiable conduct, by the parties who thus had stigmatised him.

“ We cheat the world

With florid outside, 'till we meet surprise;
Then conscience, working inward like a mole,
Crumbles the surface, and reveals the dirt,
From which our actions spring.”

The many days which he was now obliged to pass by himself, dining and supping alone, and at home; bore no less heavily on his spirits, than they did on his purse and his person. The woman at whose house he lodged

lodged, a gay and buxom widow, tho' not indifferent to Spavin's personal appearance, yet felt no small chagrin, and sometimes indignation, at the coolness of his manners towards her, and his general haughtiness of demeanour.

Though Spavin could bow with wonderful pliancy, and smile with exhaustless good humour with those to whom his interest, or his vanity induced him to be courteous ; yet to others he was cold, and not unfrequently uncivil : In truth, among the rich he was so profuse of his attentions, that he reserved none for his equals or inferiors.

Mrs. Ogle, his landlady, soon perceived the reverse of Spavin's mode of living, and as pity is said to be a-kin to love, (though the pedigree may be doubtful) she proposed that they should dine together, as the more sociable and perhaps convenient mode to him.

That

That kind of pride which makes a man ashamed of poverty, Mr. Spavin possessed in a degree very disadvantageous to a person in his situation, and some weeks elapsed before this treaty was finally concluded.

Time unemployed was still his enemy : how to reconcile himself to this best of friends, Spavin possessed no means within himself, either of amusement or business : Bred at Eaton, he had been once no inconsiderable classical scholar ; on his removal to Cambridge, where the sciences called for his attention, he found an insuperable objection to the pursuit of them in a volatile, and generally speaking, in an indolent and incurious disposition.

On his first entrance as curate of — , the genteelity of his appearance, the band-box'd neatness of his person, and the flow of apparent good humour, affability, and polite attentions, gave him free access to the tables of the neighbouring gentlemen.

The

The services by which he held this tenure of useful courtesy, to a man of his frivolous and dependant turn of mind, were a mere pepper-corn rent.

For the female part of these families he would frequently carry a slipper to town to be mended, and by back carriage convey perfumery in his crowded pockets; for the male members of this community he purchased fashionable spurs, or was commissioned to Somerset House, to discharge their taxes on equipage. These employments filled up his time for a while with sufficient anxiety, and life passed smoothly, if not profitably or creditably.

CHAP. LIII.

WHEN Mrs. Ogle, the mistress of the lodgings in which poor Jack Spavin now passed so many banyan days, proposed, as we have mentioned, a joint table establishment, she had lately received a new lodger. His age appeared about forty, and his demeanour was in general grave and taciturn. His walk was sometimes in the stile of a philosopher involved in meditation: At other times his gate was very erect, and his port bore a strong resemblance to military vivacity. His manners were at all times placid, and his temper appeared incapable of being ruffled. His conduct seemed a compound of sound thinking and regulated passions.

He

He was therefore, though grave, chearful,
and though lofty in his gestures, ever affable
and pleasing

“ How charming is divine philosophy!
Not harsh and crabbed, as dull fools suppose,
But musical as is Apollo's lute,
And a perpetual feast of nectar'd sweets,
Where no crude surfeit reigns.

Dr. Singleton, for that was the gentleman's name, was indeed a philosopher, tho' not in the modern sense of the word. He had quitted London for a few months for the benefit of country air.

As he had letters of introduction to Capt. Canvass and Mr. Selden from their town connections, he soon became the favourite of all the parties: The ladies admired him for the correctness of his manners, and the unvaried politeness of his attentions: Mr. Selden saw in him a fund of excellent sense and sagacious observation: Capt. Canvass,

‘all ear,’ attended to him whilst he related the dangers of the sea with cool indifference; and young Canvass was delighted with the cheerfulness of his address, the openness of his heart, and the generosity of his sentiments.

Among some minds friendship takes a very deep root in a small space of time; thus it happened with Dr. Singleton and the Canvasses; and the Doctor passed most of his afternoons either at the Cassino, Elm Place, or Pagoda Lodge.

At the latter of these places, one day after Mrs. Canvass, in a pleasant manner, had been rallying the Doctor on his solitary state of batchelorship, she began to say that she wondered that such man as Dr. Singleton should be doom’d to a life of such a cheerless and unsocial nature.

The Doctor’s general self - possession seem’d for a moment to forsake him, and a faint

faint blush passed over his cheek, but it was of short continuance; and he smiled complacently, and bow'd to the civil things which Mrs. Canvass had mixed with her wonders and surprises.

“ My dear Doctor,” exclaimed Charles Canvass, “ you see that my wife’s curiosity is now on tiptoe, and she will have no sleep to night, unless you will be so good as to satisfy her curiosity by some circumstances in your history that may do away the wondering which possesses her mind, that a man of your accomplishments should be a single man.” For this part of his history the Doctor had incidentally mentioned.

“ Now,” continued Canvass, smiling, “ Doctor, you know that marriage is the grand point to which all female minds are directed, and therefore it is natural for women to consider that it is likewise the center to which the thoughts of men, whatever be their situations, or whatever the peculiarity

of their minds may be, should likewise be directed."

"Indeed," replies Mrs. Canvass, "you are perfectly right, Charles, in thus stating my opinion at least, and I am very curious to know by what strange fate a man like Dr. Singleton, should miss of what is generally termed the first ingredient in human happiness, a marriage founded on sincere and mutual affection; and if nothing very melancholy attending the circumstances should prevent, I flatter myself that Dr. Singleton will be willing to gratify a curiosity, which, though it takes its rise in the bosom of a woman, owes its origin to friendship, respect, and sympathy."

CHAP. LIV.

CHARLES CANVASS pleased with the sensibility of his wife, added, "I own Dr. Singleton, that Mrs. Canvass does not alone possess this curiosity, mine is likewise awake, and desirous to hear from his own account some anecdotes of the life of a man, in the continuance of which I find myself more than commonly interested."

Whilst these compliments were uttered with equal warmth and sincerity by Mr. and Mrs. Canvass, the eyes of Dr. Singleton beamed with kindness; and though a sigh now and then involuntarily broke out, his countenance exhibited the tranquil appearance of confidence and pleasure.

H. 3

"I will

“ I will not,” says Dr. Singleton, “ before such friends, endeavour to conceal that the encomiums of persons I love fill my heart with ineffable sensations of delight,

———— ‘ My soul,
Like yours, is open to the charms of praise:
There is no joy beyond it, when the mind
Of him who hears it can, with honest pride,
Confess it just, and listen to the music.’

“ I do not mean strictly to appropriate the language of the poet to my own case, yet, if a sound education, and the example of honourable parents properly attended to, are praise-worthy things, I certainly have something to be proud of.

“ I was bred up with the strictest attention to the duties which I owe to God and my neighbour. Early accustomed to the strictest integrity, and to the most devout contemplation of an all-directing Providence, I preserved, with little effort my character unimpeached

peached, and my mind unbroken by misfortune, and I bowed submissively to superior dispensations.

“ My father was a country apothecary and surgeon in a small market town in the county of — ; though well connected he was poor : He had been well educated, and his skill in his profession was only excelled by the charitable exercise of it. He never piled on the sick man’s table gallipot on gallipot to increase his bill, but sought and often found what his moderate mind thought ample remuneration in the gratitude of his richer patients, for his tender and unremitting attentions on the indigent. He respected himself, he venerated nature, and never presumed to put his skill in competition with her salutary exertions.

“ As in a distant county opulent patients are few in number, my father’s wealth very gradually increased ; what he could spare from a regular and prudent expenditure, was be-

stowed on the education of myself and two sisters. Such was his demeanour to us all, that as soon as we could be taught to think, he mixed the openness of a friend with the authority of a father in so very judicious a manner, that we all thought his company was the most pleasant, as well as the most improving.

“ His understanding in general was sound, and his reading useful and various ; his temper uncommonly even and chearful. This equable tenor of his mind was preserved entire, by the congenial temper of his wife.

“ My mother was equally sweet in her disposition, and acute in her understanding. She had indeed an unlucky portion of satire, but it was tempered with so much acknowledged good nature, that she never offended even the persons who were the subjects of it.

“ In a small market town little histories are soon circulated, and Mrs. Singleton's *bon mots*

mots were the chief amusement of the tea-tables all round the town. This mirthful disposition was very pleasant to my father, who, after a day's hard business, found a salutary recreation at supper in the merry stories and keen observations with which my mother used to divert him till bed-time.

“ Their life was long and pleasant, and the circumstances which attended my father's death, as they mark the ease with which an honest man and a christian can meet face to face that grim King of Terror, I will not suppress. The scenery is still present to my mind, and the moral influence on my conduct still continues to be powerful.

CHAP. LV.

“MY father, (continued Dr. Singleton) at the age of seventy-six, felt the approach of death ; and having, by his professional skill, calculated, as he thought, the exact period of his dissolution, called all his family into his chamber, and with a very composed and even chearful countenance and manner thus excited our grief and astonishment !

‘ My dearest wife and children, I wish for the last time seriously to address you ; my sensations and my experience in the progress of diseases, convince me beyond a doubt that my death is very near ; and that I may venture to say, that it is nearly impossible that my existence can continue to the
end

end of a fortnight.'—Though this was spoken with the most calm utterance, and the greatest appearance of self-recollection, our sighs prevented him from going on: My mother, likewise, who at the beginning of his speech was standing close to his chair, and held his right hand in both of her's, suddenly dropt, and seem'd for a time without life. My sisters ran immediately to her assistance, and propped her in their arms till my father's voice again rous'd her from the state of insensibility into which the commencement of his speech had plunged her.

' I experience,' continued my father, ' a melancholy satisfaction from the grief which you all exhibit at my declaration: it seems to acknowledge my kindness and my care; your sorrow seems to say what my conscience tells me is true, that as an husband and a father I have little to remember that may fill me with shame or regret; it reminds me that my house has been without discord, suspicion or jealousy; and that the education

H 6

which

which I have laboured to bestow on my children has reaped the fruits of tenderness and gratitude, and I feel a wish to declare the pleasure which is now reflected to me from the recollection that I have not only endeavoured to be a good father and husband, but that I have had the most affectionate of wives, and the most obedient of children. Of my approaching dissolution,' continued the old man, animated and highly delighted, 'I can speak without affectation, and I trust without vanity, in the language of a modern and respectable dramatist.

—— "O Death! where art thou?

—— Death, thou dread of guilt,

Thou wish of innocence, affliction's friend,

Tir'd Nature calls thee.—Come, in mercy come,

And lay me pillow'd in eternal rest."

'Such is the nature of my disease,' continued my father, 'that this easy chair must be the place in which I shall make my last respiration; to go to bed, though I am feeble,

ble, would be troublesome and needless : I shall be glad to see you at times, whenever you may thing proper ; but I charge you solemnly never to approach me but with an intention to amuse with your chat, or to entertain me with the news of the day. I have no great preparation to make for death-bed meditations ; I have not deferred to the hour of debility of mind and body, those thoughts on a future existence, and a self-satisfied departure from the world, which a whole life of mental and corporeal vigour is requisite, or rather absolutely necessary to render in any degree practicable.'

" The exertion which my father made in delivering this speech, was too much for his present state of health, and at the end of it he fell back with apparent repose upon his easy chair.

" We punctually obeyed his solemn injunctions, and visited him frequently with as chearful faces as it was possible to put on, and endeavoured

deavoured to entertain him with what stories of a merry nature we could pick up. His understanding seemed quite unimpaired ; his vivacity unslackened, and his good humour suffered no decrease till a few days subsequent to the term which he had mentioned as the termination of his life, he expired in his chair without a groan.

“ That this enthusiasm was the effect of the sober life which he always led, and of the unsullied conscience which he always preserv’d, I did not then hesitate to assert, nor have I any reason from further experience to doubt.

CHAP. LVI.

“MY remaining history, Mr. Canvass, tho’ sad, shall not be querulously told : to enter into melancholy details before persons of real sensibility is harrassing ; to expatiate on woe to men of a contrary character is useless.

“ At the decease of my father I left the town of —. A young, and a very spruce surgeon from London, as he announced, tho’ I never could find that he was ever there, had for some time previous to my father’s death, become the fashionable dispenser of medicine in my native place. My father’s brother, who was a neighbouring esquire, and an old batchelor, insisted on my mother and sisters taking their abode with him ; which they
consented

consented to do, after many entreaties, and a strong declaration from me that he was a man of excellent character, and of the utmost singleness of heart.

“Leaving my mother and sisters thus comfortably settled, with a small sum of money, and a deal of spirits and expectation, I came to London that I might attend the lectures in physiology, and walk, as it is called, the hospitals.

“On my first entrance into London, I was invited to the house of a distant relation, a wealthy and sensible man. His house in town was large, and he offered me a room in it, and exhorted me to make myself at home. Less than a fortnight's residence convinced me that it was not in my power to make myself at home in another man's house. I found a restraint that all his hospitality could not remove, and I soon took a private lodging, and visited Mr. Convoy at my leisure hours. Though my circumstances did
not

not permit me to hire lodgings so convenient in every respect as those which I had left, yet here I could make myself at home, for I felt the truth of Dryden's lines most sensibly, when I quitted Mr. Convoy's ample apartments :

——“ Oh ! give me liberty !

For were e'en Paradise itself my prison,

Still should I long to leap the crystal walls.”

“ Mr. Convoy was a man of excellent understanding, and in the leisure hours which his extensive business allowed him, he employed himself in the study of nature. At his villa near town he possessed a choice collection of the best chymical authors ; our kindred studies added fresh cement to our friendship, and my visits to Mount Pleasant increased in frequency. His wife was a woman of sense, accomplishments, and of a very friendly disposition, and as much of a philosopher as the wife of a rich London merchant could be : She was very domestic and
attentive

attentive to the education of her children ; and heard of the operas, city balls, and my Lord Mayor's routs, without betraying a wish to leave her own fire side.

“ Mr. Convoy proposed to advance me a considerable sum, in order to assist me in setting up a carriage, which he asserted to be a necessary qualification for a metropolitan practiser in physic, and indeed the only method by which I could attract the attentions, or procure the respect of lucrative patients.

“ Though I was aware that the advice was as sound, as the offer which accompanied it was generous, I yet declined the proposals of my friend. Independence was my object, and not wealth ; and I considered also, that should I fail in practice, I should contract a debt which would be a great obstacle to my first wish.

“ Though I did not doubt that Mr. Convoy, with the true spirit of liberality and real friendship,

friendship, meant this offer as a gift, yet I felt myself awkward under so great an obligation. The little I possessed, with economy, to which I had always been accustomed, was sufficient to keep me, and I inherited a large collection of books, which was a kingdom to me.

“Mr. Convoy’s friendship was not to be baffled; and he shortly after introduced me to a nobleman who was going abroad, and wish’d for a friend to accompany him, and whose attendance he promised very liberally to reward. Before I conversed with this nobleman, I was averse from the proposal, on the ground of my invincible love of being my own master. The introduction to Lord Thomas Frankly, entirely removed all my scruples, and indeed substituted in their stead, a wish to join myself, as an associate, to a person whose exterior manners showed completely the gentleman.

CHAP. LVII.

“**P**HYSGNOMY, tho’ carried by an eminent writer and enthusiasts on that subject to extravagance, is yet very powerful in forming our opinions of the characters of strangers.

‘ I do not like the looks of that man,’ is a daily observation that is often made by men of sense and reflection.

“With regard to my new friend, Lord Thomas Frankly, my first opinion of him was confirmed by my future knowledge of his character. On his introduction of me to his father, previous to our leaving England, the demeanour of the Earl of Freecastle was open, majestic, and interesting. His proposals

posals to me were noble in the extreme ; his personal civilities very flattering, and his praises of my friend Convoy, warm and judicious. A very little acquaintance with my Lord Freecastle, convinced me of the truth of the poets lines, to which my mind always was favourably inclined :

“ 'Tis Nature's most inviolable law
To make each species propagate its kind ;
The generous offspring from the generous stock
Derive the virtues, and confess the sire.”

“ Tho' Lord Thomas Frankly was a very young man I did not hesitate to accompany him to the Continent; as he was pilotted thro' the Scylla and Charybdis of youthful danger, viz. women and gambling, by the care of his father, and his own delicate feelings. Betrothed to a young lady, to whom he was attached by a very early knowledge of her good qualities, he felt no temptation from the Delilahs of France and Italy ; and being very liberally supplied with money by his generous

rous father, he had no inducement from temporary want, to court the precarious smiles of fortune at the gaming table.

“ Three years passed with uninterrupted happiness by us both abroad, which we employed in an accurate survey of the beauties of nature and art, and Lord Thomas was very regular in his hours, and very assiduous in his studies and researches.

“ One morning, whilst we were at Florence, he did not appear at breakfast: As this omission was very unusual, and as I knew that he slept at home, I was very anxious to know where he was. His servant informed me, with much embarrassment in his countenance, that his master was not up, and could not then be disturbed. In the course of the morning he sent for me:—I found him pale; and he informed me he had been assassinated the night before.

“ For

“ For some days I was in hopes of his recovery, as his fever was not at all dangerous, nor his mind at all discomposed. He then unreservedly told me the fatal cause of his illness : The night before he had attended some ladies to the opera house, one of whom was exquisitely beautiful ; a Frenchman passed by them, and returning, stared with a monkey grin under the veil of this young nymph, and was about taking great liberties with her, which Lord Thomas perceiving, knock'd him down without uttering a word. The raw-boned Gaul, though capable, from his superior size, of overcoming his antagonist, and repaying him handsomely in kind, sneaked away, muttering threats between his teeth. Lord Thomas unluckily returned home alone, and on foot, from the opera house, and was attacked under the high wall of a Palazzo, and stabbed by two ruffians, who immediately made off.—He was near enough home to reach it without effort :—But alas ! I was disappointed in my hopes,
and

and Lord Thomas in a few days expired of his wounds.

“ I soon returned to England, and brought over the corpse of my very valuable friend. Mr. Convoy broke the matter to Lord Freecastle ; from whom, in the course of a few few months, I received a large packet, in which were the letters of Lord Thomas to his father, the contents of which, though my gratitude never will forget the flattering notices, yet my delicacy will prevent me from mentioning. His Lordship added, that such was his opinion of my conduct to his son, that it entitled me to a handsome remuneration ; he had therefore done himself the pleasure of settling an annuity on me, which should be paid at his banker's, and commence from the date of his letter ; and that he should consider me as the friend of his family.

“ His Lordship's generosity did not end here, but his recommendation was exerted
to

to introduce me to patients of high rank.—
My career was now begun ; and as fashion
in physic and physicians is very prevalent,
I soon gained a character of eminence, to
which I had small pretensions.

“ My practice encreased for some years ;
but the labour of my profession very soon
made inroads into a constitution never strong,
and these last few months my debility has
been alarming, and I have retired here for a
temporary relief from air and change of
place.”

CHAP. LXVIII.

AFTER the tea things were removed, Dr. Singleton proceeded in his history :

“ When my salary from Lord Freecastle, and the profits of my profession made my income considerable, I thought of marriage. At this important æra of my life, a young lady from the West Indies arrived on a visit to my friend, Mrs. Convoy. Her father, who was a West India merchant, had been dead about a twelvemonth, and had left his daughter to the care of Mrs. Convoy, with a fortune of eighty thousand pounds. Her father had married a Spanish lady of high rank, though of small fortune.

“ This

“ This lady was eminently beautiful, but her life was short. Miss Horton partook of her mother’s personal charms in a great measure, though the sun had visited her cheek too rudely during her residence in the Indies; yet the splendour of her brunette complexion, amply compensated for the absence of the lily. Her fine black eyes were as dangerous to behold as they are difficult to describe. Their transitions from the most delicate sensibility, to the most voluptuous languor, can only be imagined by those who have seen them. Her figure was of the middle size, and inclining to *en-bonpoint*. Her voice was melodious, and her skill in music was considerable.

“ As her father had concerns in the East Indies, as well as the West, Miss Horton had made herself acquainted with the Persian language, and was a great reader of Persian poetry. Reading aloud was her great fort, and the accomplishment which pleased me the most.

“ It has been shrewdly said, that when two persons of a different sex talk about love, they are then making it.—I instructed Miss Horton in the Italian language, and Petrarch seemed for some time to be her favourite ; but the warmer genius of Eastern poetry had the pre-eminence over the correct and artificial Italian bard.

“ I shall never forget the animated manner in which she repeated the beautiful English translation from Hafiz, when uttering the lines,

“ Boy, bid the liquid ruby flow,
And let the pensive heart be glad, &c.”

her eyes flash'd exquisite pleasure ; her long hair wav'd carelessly over her shoulders, and the sprightliness of her action half displayed her bosom. My imagination painted her as an antique *bacchante* ; my senses became disordered with the sight, and I snatched a kiss. I remember now with trepidation

dation the look which she cast at me ; it was a mixture of wounded delicacy and injured pride for a moment ; she saw I was shocked, and seemed to relent as she surveyed me and left the room.

“ I did not visit Mrs. Convoy for a month after that day, till I thought my absence might be construed into neglect and a want of politeness. On entering the parlour, Miss Horton was alone, and employed at the harpsichord, she rose, and with a smile, which completely ravished my heart from me, she exclaimed, ‘ Dr. Singleton, I have put your favourite Hafiz to a tune,’ which she immediately played.

This polite method of forgiving me I felt with exquisite pleasure. Though her large fortune and the appearance of pride, and love of expence, deterred me from making Miss Horton an offer of my hand, as I considered myself as much her inferior in the gifts of fortune, as and my income depended

on my life, yet love had taken possession of my mind.

I saw through the airy vivacity of Miss Horton a fund of excellent sense, delicacy of thought, and the most honourable principles of conduct. My friends, Mr. and Mrs. Convoy, entertaining hopes that I might gain the hand of the fair Indian, were assiduous in their invitations. One day I found them alone, and manifest sorrow appeared in their countenances. Mr. Convoy took me into his study, and informed me that the accounts he had had from the West Indies, brought the melancholy news that Miss Horton's whole property there was destroyed by a hurricane.

“ I received this news with much more composure than the worthy merchant could suppose possible, for I had communicated to him my attachment to Miss Horton.— As soon as it was possible, I begged to see Miss Horton ; I found her very unwell ; her
spirits

spirits had left her, and the splendour of her eye was half extinguished. She sat silent, looked at me with great kindness, and sighed heavily. On all subjects but one we had exchanged our most intimate thoughts ; on that one subject I now ventured to enter, and expressed my unalterable affection to her, and my wish to be her protector thro' life. She took my hand, and looking at me with a countenance full of the most exquisite tenderness, exclaimed :

' Once that might have been ; now it never can—it never shall.'

“ Finding my presence added to the afflictions of her mind, I left her with the warmest and sincerest wishes for her welfare, and repeated my vows of inviolable attachment. From this time I never saw her more.

“ Mr. and Mrs. Convoy, seeing the rapid decline of Miss Horton's health, took

her to Bristol ; and about five weeks after their departure, I received a letter from Mrs. Convoy, mentioning the death of Miss Horton, who some days previously to her decease, declared to her friend her intention to accept of my offers, had not her fortune been so suddenly taken away from her ; after that, she declared that no time or circumstances should alter her resolution to refuse me, should I make an offer, adding, in a manner peculiar to herself, that though she found herself capable of conferring the greatest benefit on the person she loved, yet she could not bring her proud heart to receive any favour, though incalculably less.

Thus Louisa Horton, brought up in the lap of Eastern luxury, could not stoop to the more moderate and satisfactory enjoyments of life, but tarnished many valuable qualities of head and heart by invincible pride, and fell a sacrifice in early youth to a fondness of the glare and parade of the world.

“ Having

“ Having thus lost a friend I honoured, and a mistress I loved, I must confess, Mr. Canvass, that life has little claim to my attention ; but, continued he, as I have money sufficient to make me independent ; and as I like this neighbourhood, which is strongly recommended to me by being with you and your connections.—I mean to take a house here, whenever I can get one : My profession I shall give up, and practice no further than to be of assistance to my friends, and the poor in my neighbourhood.”

The Canvasses were rejoiced at the intentions of Dr. Singleton, and promised him assistance in procuring a suitable house for him.

CHAP. LXIX.

SUCH was the character and situation of Dr. Singleton, the new lodger at the widow Ogle's. When he was informed that a clergyman was in the house, he was very desirous of his acquaintance ; and the widow Ogle, who was a very chatty woman, informed him of many particulars of Mr. Spavin's affairs.— In her narrative she introduced some facts, and a great variety of conjectures.

A man of wit once apologized for a lady, whose little stories were not supposed to be often connected with sober truths, by saying that her imagination was sometimes so good as to assist her memory.

So

So polite an excuse for Mrs. Ogle could not be justly adduced. The very slight attentions paid to her by her ecclesiastical guest, very much enraged the *fair* hostess; for she had considerable claim to that title by her youth, and the comeliness of her person.

These advantages had, in early life, rais'd her from the situation of a maid-servant, to be the lawful wife of her master. Mr. Ogle, her husband, was an attorney of some practice, of dubious honesty and acknowledged extravagance; for a promise of a considerable sum of money had engaged Mr. Ogle in a transaction which, if it had come to light, would have confined him between four walls all his life-time. Mr. Selden, with his usual sagacity, industry, and intrepidity, prevented this business from proceeding to the ruin of the innocent parties, and wrote a letter to Mr. Ogle, insisting on his stopping the business, or he would disclose his part in this infamous transaction. Ogle, afraid to go on,

and incapable of receding, put an end to an abandoned life, by the atrocious act of self-murder.

The widow took possession of all his property, which consisted only of the house which she then liv'd in, and which was indifferently furnished ; but as it stood very pleasantly, she always, during the summer, let some of the apartments very advantageously. Hearing from the tattle of the parish that poor Spavin was shut out from the good houses which he used to frequent, tho' she was ignorant of the cause, yet she *informed* Dr. Singleton, that his democratical principles occasioned his exclusion ; and hinted that she was so well convinced of his poverty, that and she should soon clear the house of him.

Dr. Singleton began to suspect, that this lively widow was under the influence of some passion, which was equally an enemy to her candour, her charity, or her love of truth. That a clergyman of the Church of England

land should adopt Jacobinical principles, appeared to the perception of Dr. Singleton so very extraordinary, that he thought some better evidence was necessary to substantiate such a strange assertion, and he was determined, at his introduction to Mr. Spavin, to sound him upon his notions both with respect to his civil and ecclesiastical opinions.

The manners of Mrs. Ogle wore that particular aspect, which to a man so conversant with the sex as was Dr. Singleton, produced a suspicion that Mrs. Ogle could not hate Mr. Spavin to this degree, unless she had also once loved him to a still greater : Nor was he mistaken. The looks of the widow were very particular when Mr. Spavin first became her lodger : This circumstance Spavin, whose vanity was not interested, did not regard, but treated Mrs. Ogle in the manner which an indelicate mind is apt to show to a person whom they conceive as their inferior, from the circumstance of paying them money.

This

This behaviour the gay widow soon resented, and wishing to gain Dr. Singleton on her side, had related to him the above particulars, as well as the unwillingness which he showed to assent to her proposal of dining at the same table with her.

Dr. Singleton, as we have said, was a man who knew the world, and therefore did not give implicit credit to Mrs. Ogle's tale; for he well knew that

“ Man, as if a foe to his own species,
Takes pleasure to report his neighbour's faults,
Judging with rigour every small offence,
And prides himself in scandal.”

He therefore awaited the personal knowledge which he might obtain of Mr. Spavin's character, before he formed a decision against him.

CHAP. LXX.

THE first time that Dr. Singleton and Mr. Spavin met at the table of Mrs. Ogle, the latter surveyed the stranger with a cold haughtiness. The conversation was languid, and the parties seem'd little inclined to communicate any vigour to it.

Mrs. Ogle, indeed, talked to Mr. Spavin in pretty plain terms, and insinuated in a very intelligible manner, that she did not wish for lodgers in her house, who were both poor and proud ; and gave several hints that she expected a gentleman (this term was emphatically pronounced) who would take the very room poor Spavin then occupied, for a whole year, at a very large rent, which
he

he had offered her, to prevent her from letting them to any one else.

Mr. Spavin knew his year was near its expiration, and was conscious that his payments had not been very regular, and that his apartments were let to him on very cheap conditions. He therefore felt himself very awkward during the dinner, and very soon afterwards retired to his room.

The widow, indeed, had not confin'd her scheme to clear her house of poor Spavin, by attacks on the delicacy of his feelings, or the irritability of his disposition; but had circulated poor Spavin's situation and poverty with exaggerations among his various tradesmen.

The most tremendous of these unwelcome visitors was a Londoner, and a relation of Mrs. Ogle. This man, as he had often seen Mr. Spavin in town, with a servant behind him, and mounted on a fine mare, concluded that
he

he was a man of fortune, and had therefore given him a very large credit.—Mr. Spavin had always paid the utmost attention to outward appearance; and his dress would have been a burdensome expence to a man possessed with an income four times larger than that of Mr. Spavin's.

Very soon after the information given him by Mrs. Ogle, of Mr. Spavin's affairs, Mr. Callico called on Mr. Spavin one morning, and entering his room without any ceremony, produced a bill of very uncommon length.—Had Spavin seen one of the largest African snakes (which it much resembled by the length of its volume, whilst it unrolled its hideous folds over the whole room) his amazement and his terror could not have been greater. The alarms were, if possible, increased by the relentless demands of Mr. Callico for the speedy discharge of the numerous articles contained in this formidable instrument.

The

The silence and timidity which distinguished the demeanour of Mr. Spavin, in the same proportion moved the courage and animated the eloquence of the intrepid taylor. His voice, which breathed nothing but threats of arrest and imprisonment, was now so loud that Dr. Singleton, in an adjacent apartment, was interrupted in his lucubrations : He soon perceived the subject of these sonorous ejaculations, and thought he knew the voice from which they proceeded.

Ringing his bell, he desired the maid to ask the person now with Mr. Spavin, if his name was not Callico, of Tavistock-street, and if it was, that Dr. Singleton would be glad to speak to him before he went away.—An answer was immediately brought back, that Mr. Callico would do himself the honour to pay his respects to Dr. Singleton.

When

When Mr. Callico entered the room of Dr. Singleton, how changed was his appearance, and how altered his tone :—His lion front was now no more, and the loud language which he had held to Mr. Spavin was dropped ; he now ‘ roared as gently as any sucking dove, or an ’twere a nightingale ;’ and with many low bows and wreathed smiles, begged to know if Dr. Singleton would honour him with any commands.

Dr. Singleton who partly heard, and partly guessed the business of Mr. Callico with Spavin, desired the latter would stop any proceedings in regard to his bill, as he promised to be security for Mr. Spavin ; and that he should hear from him in the course of a month. Mr. Callico then repeated his bows, and retired, perfectly satisfied with the security of one of the oldest and best of his customers, as far as punctuality of payment could recommend his custom.

CHAP. LXXI.

AFTER dinner, on that same day, poor Spavin, as an anodyne to the unpleasant reflections of the morning, drank several glasses of wine with great rapidity; and his tongue outrunning that of his landlady, who knew that Dr. Singleton had taken the part of Mr. Spavin, she had more than usually soon left the room.

Spavin, whose mind became unreserved, from the wine which he had drank, and finding that Dr. Singleton was ready to hear what he had to say, recorded in very angry and very bold terms, the visit of Mr. Callico, which he termed very impertinent.

Dr.

Dr. Singleton did not wish to discuss the question of the impertinence of a person demanding what was his due; but in a very friendly manner, informed Mr. Spavin that he had guaranteed him from the importunities of Mr. Callico, during the next month, when he did not doubt but Mr. Spavin would be prepared to meet him.

Spavin, already warm with wine, and pleased and encouraged by the kindness of Dr. Singleton, laid before him all his circumstances, and his intentions of quitting his present situation. He likewise informed him, that he should write to his particular friend, Lord Axletree, who, he doubted not, would be willing to give any assistance in his power, as they were old college friends.

The fact was, that Spavin, when at Cambridge, had been what is called a tuft-hunter, and in the world by a grosser appellation, viz. a toad-eater. Vanity, indeed, or rather interest, made Spavin fond of the company

pany of men of rank ; and on this slippery footing he had commenced an acquaintance with Lord Axletree. Identity of amusements, as well as of more serious and respectable pursuits in life, are frequently seen to be a very strong cement of acquaintance and intimacy between young persons of moderate understandings :—They were both knights of the turf. Axletree at the University was an idle and unthinking young man, and was glad of any company in a place to the more useful vocations of which he was not drawn by interest or inclination to attend :

“ Since his addiction was to courses vain ;
His companies unlettered, rude and shallow ;
His hours fill'd up with riots, banquets, sports ;
And never noted in him any study,
Any retirement.”

When Lord Axletree entered into the world, and assumed the consequence annexed to his rank and fortune, his opinion
of

of his former acquaintance was totally changed. He then looked forward to honours and power, and no longer

“ Now up-held
The unyok'd humour of their idleness.”

As Spavin could procure no vote for his Lordship at any election, nor promote in any way his fame or his interest, Spavin, with many other fellows of no note or likelihood, had fallen out of the memory of this polite person; but Spavin's memory was better than that of his noble friend, and it had received great reinforcement from a trivial circumstance since they had both left the University.

One day, sauntering down Bond-street, Spavin met Lord Axletree, who scarce attending to Spavin's wishes and hopes that his Lordship was perfectly in health, and had continued so since their last meeting, and looking very cool at Spavin's declaration,
that

that he was very glad to see him, his Lordship informed him, that he came to town to buy a new set of coach horses.

Spavin, eager to renew the acquaintance, offered his services to execute this commission without fee or reward for his noble friend. With a good deal of trouble, and no little expence, he finished this negotiation, and sent down the horses to his Lordship's residence at Barnacle-hall, in the county of —, for which trouble he received a very polite letter: On this ground Spavin considered his Lordship as his correspondent, and a person to whom on all occasions he might write, and that Barnacle hall was accessible to him at his leisure.

CHAP. LXXII.

THO' by the kind interference of Doctor Singleton, most of the personages that visited, uninvited, the threshold of Mr. Spavin, were silenced; yet many petty creditors remained, whose unpaid bills, though small, stuck like burs about Mr. Spavin's premises, and gave him much uneasiness.

He was compelled therefore to think of ways and means.—He was determined to write to his friend, Lord Axletree. Mr Spavin's letter was filled with abuse of the persons in his neighbourhood, whose want of politeness and hospitality he grievously complained of, and whose manners he described as barbarous and *tramontane*: He likewise in-

veighed against their pride, gluttony, and avarice, and ended his description of them by stigmatising them as men devoid of all tasteful pursuits, and foes to all literary accomplishments.

That a complaint of the latter kind should be written to a man, of whose learning Spavin had no opinion, may appear incongruous, till we recollect that the writer was dealing in wholesale satire, and therefore was not very circumspect in the selection of his topics. He concluded this angry epistle with a wish to obtain a curacy in the neighbourhood of Barnacle-hall, which was at present, he affirmed, the utmost of his ambition.

Lord Axletree was, in theory, as keen a sportsman as his clerical friend, though not so skillful in the practice; and he was jealous of Spavin's superior talents and erudition in cropping, docking, and purchasing horses, and therefore was very unwilling that

that his friend, Mr. Spavin, should be settled in the vicinity of Barnacle-hall. He was apprehensive that his present stock of stable knowledge would be eclipsed, and the source from which it originally flowed should be soon discovered.—A second reason, and perhaps the first which governed his Lordship in his resolution to keep Mr. Spavin at a distance was, that he had an unmarried sister, a very fine and lively girl, and of an age over which Dan Cupid exercises supreme dominion, without a struggle to oppose his force, or reason to dispute his commands.

Tho' a proud man, he had when young,
made a match of love, or at least of desire,
whereby his ambition and his pride had been
for a time suspended ; and he felt by experience,
that the lines of the poet are not
founded in the dreams of fancy.

“ Almighty Love, what wonders are not thine !

Soon as thy influence breathes upon the soul ;

By thee the haughty bend the suppliant knee ;

K 2

By

By thee the hand of Avarice is open'd
Into profusion : By thy power the heart
Of cruelty is melted into softness ;
The rude grow tender, and the timid hold."

Lady Axletree was a daughter of one of his Lordship's tenants : Her ambition was equal to his own, and her talents superior. Her beauty ruled his heart ; and his head was under the controul of her understanding. He feared therefore that twenty thousand pounds, and a pretty woman in view, might make Mr. Spavin forget the respect and friendship to him which he had always declared, and induce him to make love to his sister.

These very prudent precautions prevailed with Lord Axletree, and with the help of her ladyship he wrote a very civil, but somewhat didactic epistle to his friend, Mr. Spavin. He expressed a wish that the Bishop might find him employment in his own county, and among his old friends and relations, which would be more comfortable than

than among perfect strangers ; adding, that if his present curacy did not supply him with all the elegancies of life, he might make a very handsome addition to it by annexing himself as an assistant to some fashionable academy in the neighbourhood of London, where the master, no doubt, would be glad to accept of a colleague who had been educated at one of the Universities.—The postscript included an offer to purchase his favourite mare at a reasonable price.

This postscript was undoubtedly in the hand-writing of Lord Axletree, though the body of the letter appeared to be composed by a female pen; the postscript might, indeed, have been written by his Lordship's groom; as the sprawling of the letters, and their want of arrangement created suspicion. The contents, however, were sufficiently intelligible: and they concluded with saying, his Lordship would send a confidential servant for the mare, by whom the purchase money should be immediately paid down.

CHAP. LXXIII.

THE surprise, and indeed astonishment, which this letter from Lord Axletree produced in the mind of Spavin, are not easy to be described, and would not have soon quitted possession of it, had not another passion driven them out. Indignation now took its turn, and many a bitter sarcasm did Jack Spavin utter against this Jockey Lord.

Spavin had always held the understanding of his Lordship in very little estimation ;— he had considered him as a credulous, good humoured, and very ductile person, to whom he might apply, on any emergency, with a certain hope of considerable assistance.—

When

When he found this easy companion writing him a letter full of sage advice, and without even pitying his distress, attacking his feelings in the most tender point, by insinuating that he ought to part with his favorite mare, and even wishing to purchase it himself, at what he vulgarly termed a reasonable price, the wrath of Spavin knew no bounds, and he exclaimed loudly against his mercenary disposition; and declared that Lord Axletree, instead of being a very fine, hearty, and a first-rate sportsman, was the meekest *cent. per cent.* chapman in the kingdom.

Full of indignation, which he could not keep to himself, he was determined to expose his Lordship's mean spirit and want of friendship, and repaired to his confidant, Dr. Singleton, and shewed him Lord Axletree's letter, accompanying the Doctor's perusal of it with very violent comments, which his anger, rather than his reason, gave vent to.

Dr. Singleton, who now perfectly understood Jack Spavin's character, and saw that vanity and folly, rather than any serious want of principle, disfigured it, endeavoured all in his power to prevent any disgrace coming upon him from his embarrassments, and read the letter with a good deal of concern; which interest in favour of Spavin he would not have felt, had he known his conduct towards Miss La Blanc.

With Dr. Singleton, "the days of Chivalry were not gone by," and he was a man of honour in the truly philosophic meaning of the word.

"Honour's a sacred tie, the law of kings,
The noble mind's distinguishing perfection,
That aids and strengthens Virtue where it meets her,
And imitates her actions where she is not.
It is not to be sported with."

On questioning Spavin on the grounds, nature, and progress of his friendship with
Lord

Lord Axletree, Dr. Singleton soon perceived, that the young man had mistaken a boon companion for this venerable and sacred character ; nor did he consider his Lordship as composed of those materials, on which so valuable a stamp could be deeply impressed. He advised Spavin to drop his crude acquaintance with Lord Axletree, which, by the tenor of his letter, appeared to have vanished in a sudden fit of spleen, and never seemed likely to have matured into friendship, as the acquaintance, by Spavin's own account, originated from the tavern and the stable. " Need I remind you of the poet's lines, Mr. Spavin ?

" Friendships that are not founded upon virtue,

Deserve no better names than leagues in vice.

What seeks the drunkard in his best lov'd friend

A brain to bear, a thirst by wine unslack'd.

What he, who gives the rein to wanton joys ?

Some wretch of morals diss'lute as himself.

Thus our own appetites confirm the choice ;

And when we think we seal a man our friend,

And most approve him, we approve ourselves."

Impressed by the manner as well as the matter of this short lecture, Spavin with a conscious blush, acknowledged the truth of the poet's observation, and the propriety of its application to himself. He promised, therefore, no more to build any hopes on Lord Axletree's friendship, but to put his own shoulder to the wheel, and to endeavour to retrieve his credit by his own exertions.

"This declaration," replied Dr. Singleton, "reminds me of his Lordship's letter, in which there is some advice that behoves you to follow. As your affairs are in that condition, of which you have done me the honour to inform me, you cannot do better than to let Lord Axletree purchase your horse, for which I doubt not he will pay you an handsome sum ; and to call in all your debts, and to discharge them as soon as possible."

This Spavin agreed to do ; and then took leave of the man whom he now considered, and with justice and truth, as his real friend.

CHAP.

CHAP. LXXIV.

MR. SPAVIN, on retiring to his room, again perused his lordship's letter, but with great composure and presence of mind. He was determined to assume the diplomatic stile, and as he was not without hopes that his lordship on dropping his acquaintance totally might palliate this harsh measure by some act of generosity, he was determined not to affix any price to the mare, but to leave it to his lordship's liberality.

As Spavin was one of those men whose geese are all swans, he did not forget to run over and over the praises of Miss Fidget, his mare, lest his lordship should not remember the praises he had bestowed on her in the presence of his lordship when he had the honour to meet him in London. In fact, these

panegyrics on Miss Fidget Lord Axletree did most correctly remember, and was very desirous of having the aforesaid steed, as he was entirely confident in the skill of his friend in that part of natural history which related to horse-flesh.

Spavin continued, that the mare was at his service at his own price; adding, that he knew that his Lordship's taste in horses was only exceeded by his generosity in rewarding those who supplied him with judgement and fidelity.—He hoped also that his Lordship was satisfied with the set of bays which he had some months since done himself the honour to send to Barnacle Hall, and that he should think himself fully rewarded for the trouble and expence which he had been at in this commission, if his lordship felt the same pleasure in setting behind them which he himself had experienced during his trial of them in and about the metropolis.

This

This very complaisant letter Jack immediately sent into Devonshire, to Barnacle Hall, and waited with great anxiety for an answer to this horse dedication to his *knowing* and noble correspondent.

Though this epistle was composed of honey'd words, yet in some of the contents a latent sting was to be discovered; his Lordship, on reading them could not help recollecting that he had not rewarded the trouble nor even repaid the expences which Spavin must have been exposed to in the commission of purchasing, trying, feeding, docking, cropping, &c. of the six coach horses, to which omission Spavin plainly alluded in his letter.

This reminiscence looked his Lordship glaringly in the face, and though he and his Lady were too ostentatious and extravagant in their mode of life, to be able or willing to do acts of liberality or charity, yet was he determined in the last and concluding act of
his

his connection with Spavin, to come off with some éclat; he therefore in his turn sat down to write a very polite letter to Mr. Spavin; he lamented his want of patronage, and that the few livings which he possessed were too small for the acceptance of Mr. Spavin, and as they lie in distant counties, they could not serve the much desired purpose of his first letter, *viz.* that of bringing him into the vicinity of Barnacle Hall; adding, that he returned him the most sincere thanks, and felt the most warm gratitude, for the extraordinary service which he had performed in purchasing the above-mentioned set of coach horses, which were without a single fault, and judged infinitely superior to a set of horses belonging to his sporting neighbour, Sir Whipham Barshoe, as had been acknowledged by the whole county at the last races.—He concluded with wishing him that quantity of preferment which might enable him to sit behind a set of equal figure and speed.

Vegetables

Vegetables in a state of fermentation, or to speak more philosophically, of dissolution, produce much caloric ; and thus the epistles of these two friends, whose connection was in a state of decomposition, emitted sparks of palpable warmth, and phosphoric gas.

We are almost inclined to think that his Lordship and Mr. Spavin had read the following lines of our immortal bard ; their conduct seems so nearly transcribed from him. —

————— “ Ever note, Lucilius,
When love begins to sicken and decay,
It uses an inforc'd ceremony :
There are no tricks in plain and simple faith :
But hollow men, like horses hot at heart
Make gallant shew and promise of their metal ;
But when they should endure the bloody spur,
They fall their crest, and like deceitful jades
Sink on the trial.”

CHAP. LXXV.

IN the course of a fortnight a groom arrived bearing a letter, the contents of which the reader is already acquainted, with the bank note which was inclosed in it for an hundred pounds. Jack Spavin, who valued his mare at eighty, was very little satisfied with the remaining sum as the remuneration for all his trouble, and this too from a man whom he liked as a friend and venerated as a lord.

Though generosity seems a part of a nobleman's character, and no doubt is so, yet as nature does not make noblemen of any other materials than go to the composition of other men, good and bad qualities belong to individuals

individuals of every rank and order ; and shame fall on the heads of those writers who confine virtue to a low situation, and exclude it from men of high stations ; such writers betray at once their ignorance of the world, or have lost their candour amidst the clamours of a party.

Spavin, who possessed little powers of distinction, and, when his own feelings were concerned, was little acquainted with the language of candour, abused lords altogether as proud, selfish, and ungrateful ; at the same time he would have thought it very absurd and unjust if Mr. Singleton, on being acquainted with his character, as a false swain and an idle coxcomb, should throw a general censure upon the respectable body of men to which he belonged.

But to return to our story :—The remuneration falling so far below Spavin's expectation, cured him of ambition and a sanguine habit of hoping: This disappointment indeed was galling, but —

— “ Like

—— “ Like the toad,
It bore a precious jewel in its head.”

And as ‘little things are great to little minds,’ the parting with his mare was a grievous but necessary preparation to the arrangement which he had planned with Dr. Singleton, and had promised to go through with.

When Miss Fidget was led out of the yard by Lord Axletree’s groom, who was a very surly and impudent fellow, and had given the mare a severe blow on the head for her hanging back, the tears stood in Spavin’s eyes, and he felt a sorrow little less than that of the Moor, when he exclaimed

“ Othello’s occupation’s gone ! ”

The next morning the various petty debts of Mr. Spavin were discharged, and Mrs. Ogle’s bill was cleared to the utmost farthing; which circumstance, as it surprized, did

did not so much please her as might be expected, for she left the room with a very haughty air, muttering very audibly, "that she did not want the money, no; she had very good friends who could assist her at any time, but she always expected to be treated like a gentlewoman."

This speech was levelled equally at both, Mr. Spavin and Dr. Singleton. The Doctor observing the levity and impertinence of her conversation at her table, was determined to shew her that he saw that she did not know her own place. His behaviour to her was distant, and his answers to her at all times dry and short. Mr. Callico's bill still remained uncanceled.

Mr. Spavin now properly humbled and brought to reason by his misfortunes, mentioned, with some querulous apprehensions, the savage conduct of Callico to him on his producing his bill.

"When

“ When we meet at dinner,” says Dr. Singleton, “ I will tell you more about this fellow, for he is a great character, and a good deal different in his principles from what I thought, or I should have been very cautious of employing such a canting rascal, for such he is ; but I have a reason why I shall defer my account till we all meet at dinner, then ask me for an account of Mr. Callico.

CHAP. LXXVI.

WHEN the dinner was ended, and Mrs. Ogle was making her usual comfortable potation of brandy and water, Spavin recollected the injunction of Dr. Singleton concerning Mr. Callico's history, and requested some anecdotes concerning him.

“ This

“ This Callico,” replied the Doctor, “ is a very singular character.—I was first recommended to him by a young Oxonian, who lodged in the same house in London with me, and who had employed him before he removed himself to the metropolis, which he did not do voluntarily, as I understood afterwards, for his seditious and irreligious conversation drove him from the place. — Though an half-witted fellow he pleased some few young men by his oddities, and his uncommon effrontery, and the jokes which they very freely threw at him, his want of feeling, or his vanity, prevented from being galling to him.

Being often detained by them beyond the time of business, he had filled his head with a variety of crude scraps of learned sentences, and could manage some parts very tolerably. This smattering, a man of his vanity soon raised into the notion, that he was a person of learning and a genius, and coming to London, as he was a rich man, he soon became a
member

member of political clubs, where his genius for politics was much applauded by those who found that his private dinners were frequent, plentiful, and of easy access to them."

Mrs. Ogle, who suspected (which was really the case) that Dr. Singleton was acquainted with her relationship to Callico, now left the room in a great rage, declaring, "that she was not to be insulted at her own table, and wishing that she was a man."

This passion of the lady's was highly gratifying to Spavin, who had frequently suffered under her tongue, and he called out to Dr. Singleton, without taking any notice of the Lady's abrupt departure, "well Doctor, go on with this philosopher, pray."

"Not long after he became a member of these clubs, he became a speaker also; and he soon habituated himself to abuse the laws and constitution with all the petulance of Tom Payne, or to cavil at them with the
flippant

flippant sophistry of the author of 'Political Justice:' and his speeches are now approved of by the clubs with acclamations and huzzas; and they are recorded by the public prints of a certain description, with honourable mention. This I understand is his progress in politics, made since his arrival in town, and his religious notions have been since improved by the writings of Dr. P——y, and he is become a *philosophical necessitudinarian*.

“ But I must go back to my first acquaintance with this great speculator in politics and religion; for he was then, in comparison to his present state of mind, an humble, droll, good humoured fellow, with a spice of the solemn coxcomb mixed with his familiarities; for no College tutor could be more grave in his aspect, or more dogmatic in his assertions than he was then; but as I said, he retained some remains of humility and ingenuousness of disposition.

“ Mr.

“ Mr. Banter, the young Oxonian, whom I mentioned as my fellow lodger in London, recommended to me this man as a taylor, and introduced him to me in a manner so thoroughly sarcastic, and with such an air of ridicule, that I was astonished that the fellow could keep so grave and solemn a countenance, and preserve an appearance of consequence, when he should have felt indignation, or the utmost degree of humility.

“ I caught the spirit of my companion, and was determined to laugh at this pompous blockhead.—I addressed Mr. Callico with the usual question, ‘ what fashionable patterns have you got?’

‘ Sir,’ replied this decorator of the human figure, ‘ I have got broad cloth to suit the shoulders of Hercules; superfine for the Apollo Belvidere, and an ample assortment of everlasting for Jupiter Ammon.’

‘ Most

‘Most learned artificer,’ replied I, ‘where did you gain this information? The persons whom you mention with such familiarity always appeared naked, if we may judge from a view of the exquisite statues of them by Greek and Roman artists, except Hercules, indeed, who is sometimes clothed in the skin of a Nemean lion, an animal, I suppose, that a man of your profession is little acquainted with. Apollo, we may suppose, as a poet, was not a very well dress’d person, as these sort of gentry, Mr. Callico, have no great interest with their tailors, I presume, and that the measure which they pique themselves upon, is very different from that employed by artificers like yourself, Mr. Callico. Jupiter, indeed, who was called the Cloud Compeller, might, according to the difference of weather and climate, have sometimes appeared in a dark, and sometimes in a gay coloured cloud.’—I was talking thus in a bantering way to Mr. Callico, when with great gravity of countenance, he assumed his turn to speak.

L

‘Dr.

‘Dr. Singleton, I have seldom met with a more learned man than yourself, though I have lived among them, as I may say, with some credit and familiarity; I will therefore intrust you with my history.’ Saying this, he, in a very solemn manner, put a very soiled manuscript into my hands.

This is my birth, parentage, and education, written by a friend of mine, a Batchelor of Arts and Sciences, of — College, in Oxford: He owed me a little bill, but then I said nothing, and he rewarded my long patience with this choice piece of biography, as he said it would be a loss to literature should my father’s life, and my education have been unknown to the world; I supplied the matter. When you have copied the manuscript, you will be so good as to return it.

Looking over my papers the other day I found this copy of Mr. Callico’s birth and parentage: It seems in the first part a sketch of Mr. Callico’s frenzy, and pomp of words,
he

he, no doubt, therefore considered the writer as a genius, and he appears to have won the heart of this fashion-monger, by the compliment at the end of it. Spavin very eagerly desired the Doctor to read it out; the Doctor smiled, and, with an audible and ludicrous tone of voice, uttered as follows:

THE PROGRESS OF POETRY.

A SHORT TALE.

“ JOHN Callico, father of the present Mr. Callico, well known in the seat of the Muses for the versatility of his talents, and the profundity of his erudition, was, as his son is now, a celebrated decorator of the human figure. By his skill in the use of the shears, and a competent knowledge of anatomy, he would conceal the obesity of a doctor, substantiate the slimness of the still growing stripling, and give to cubical brevity the airy form of protracted elegance. But the early impressions of youth are not

easily effaced, and the seeds of that imagination which were to sprout into mature absurdity, and ramify into every species of oscitation, were planted in the mind of Mr. Callico's father, in the shop of his grandfather.

“ Abraham Callico kept a green shop in Covent-garden; he was a plain, sensible man, and exempt from the aberrations of fancy, or the fraudilencies of hope, and adhered to his business with laudable pertinacity. The variety of gorgeous cauliflowers, and the judicious arrangement of umbrageous cabbages that adorned the shop of Mr. Abraham Callico, attracted the eye, and soothed to airy dreams, the ardent imagination, of Mr. John Callico.

“ This lovely and perennial exhibition of the vegetable world inspired him with an enthusiastic admiration of nature, and he frequently snatched the pen from his ear, not to inscribe the name of the pennyless purchaser

purchaser of his father's wares, but to celebrate their verdure, and to elevate their stalks on his well-built lofty rhimes. Parental objurgations were harsh, and of no avail, for the love of poetry, like the bite of the tarantula, admits no palliation but what soft sounds can administer.

“ The hand organ of the itinerant musicians would often lull the ‘aching sense of woe’ when Mr. Abraham Callico had been foaming in threats, or exercising the more convincing argument of vigorous verberation on the shoulders of his son. Self-banishment appeared the only resource to the youthful bard, and he suddenly quitted the purlieus of his father's shop, and on the top of a stage coach he in a few miles from town awaked to new-born ecstacies, and found that all nature was a garden.

“ Though arrived at the age of sixteen, young Callico had never been beyond the smoke of town : He felt, for the first time,

the pleasure arising from extensive views of meadows and fields, and he breathed an atmosphere unknown to his sensations, and without a plan of providing for to-morrow, he thought himself an happy man. It is true, that with the help of Bysche's Art of Poetry, he had written many a pastoral in praise of a rural life, and with the aid of Tooke's Pantheon he had written on the charms of Venus, the thunder of Jupiter, and the elegance of the graces. He now began to feel that his pastorals were untrue to nature, and that his mythologic diction could please him no longer, and was involved in the composition of a new Poem, called an Adieu to London, or an Hymn to Nature, when the vehicle on whose top he was resting came with a crush to the ground.

“ Amidst the shrieks of the inside passengers, and the terror of his companions on the outside, he was aroused from his reveries, and betook himself in his fright, with great speed, away from the wreck of the
the

the carriage, and posted down the road with the swiftness of a winged messenger. Resting on an hillock near the road, he espied a one-horse chaise coming along the road, containing a large and portly man in it, who was driving it. A poet seldom attends to the forms of the world, but a good deal to his own sensations; and as the man was by himself, and pleased young Callico by the openness of his countenance, he told him he was on his way to Oxford, and hoped he would give him a lift thither."

"What, my boy, you are some Oxford poet, I suppose; come, get in, you are very welcome, though I do not like the cut of your coat, or the ——"

"I am no Oxford poet," replied Callico, "I am a pastoral poet in the city of London, from whence I am now emerging into the regions of bliss."

"I am no poet at all, thank God," replied the other, "but I am a tradesman who owe no one any thing, and never trust poets because I have known them ; but as you are a young poet, and can't have ruin'd any of my profession, you are very welcome to take a part in my chaise."

"And who are you?" replied Callico, in a rage, "who talk thus of poets, and what trade can you be of that you fear a trick from a poet? Was you ever acquainted with poets?"

"I see them every day" replied the other, "with tattered gowns, and coats out at elbow."

"Where the devil do you live," says the other, "to see such strange sights? Tell me, I say," exclaimed young Callico, 'his eye in a fine phrenzy rolling.' "What trade do you follow, and what place do you inhabit

habit that you thus speak of poets, at once so familiarly and so contemptuously?"

"I am an Oxford taylor;" replied the other, a little alarmed at the fiery looks and impassioned utterance of his companion.

"I am going" says Callico, "to visit an uncle in that place, and I shall tell him what you say of poets, for I have heard him say they are very fine jovial happy fellows, and that the seat of the Muses is the residence of mirth and felicity."

"He is not a taylor:" replied the other.

"He is an inn-keeper," replied Callico, "and though you are a portly figure, yet would he make two of you."

Now two persons in an one-horse chaise, who so much differ in opinion as did young Callico and Mr. Tape, his companion, must either separate or travel on in silence. They

did the latter: On arriving at Oxford, Mr. Tape sat his companion down at his uncle's inn-yard. The interview between the uncle and nephew was not encouraging to the latter, nor did the former exhibit the sleek appearance which his nephew had formerly known him to possess.

"I hope you are coming here, nephew, for some good place by appointment?"

"I am come here" returned the youth, "as a Poet, and to embrace my brother Poets."

The uncle made wry faces. "My inn once flourished before a club of Poets entered it: I was amused at first by their company, because they never disputed their bills, and I have been ruined by them since because they never paid them." The sorrows of the uncle were only exceeded by the astonishment of the nephew.

"What

“What shall I do? Where shall I turn?”
exclaimed the Bard.

“Down the next street,” replied the melancholy vintner, “and tell Mr. Tape, the taylor, that I recommend you to him as an apprentice, if he has not provided himself in town.”

“I am hungry and tired,” replied the Poet, “and can think of nothing to-night.”

“I will have no Poet again sup at my house, whilst my name is Spiggot,” replied the uncle.

“I will call on Mr. Tape to-morrow,” replied the famished Bard.

“I will go with you to-night,” replied the resolute vintner.

Young Callico, who never felt the pain of hunger before, or ever heard that a Poet was thought a cheat and a beggar, could hold

out no longer; but in a tone of voice as if a jail was opening before him, exclaimed, with a few reluctant sighs, "I will be a taylor."

Having called on Mr. Tape, and settled the indenture, the uncle, nephew, and his new master, passed a very pleasant evening together, and young Callico began shrewdly to suspect, that a taylor, after a good supper, was superior to a Poet without any.

"Thus was the father of our present genius settled in a lucrative business, and his Byshe's Art of Poetry was placed in the lumber room. He married his master's daughter—was a sober minded man—wrote nothing but his bills at Christmas—begot the eloquent Mr. Callico, who will inform the present enlightened age that the utmost attention to business is not incompatible with the pursuit of learning, when carried on by a man of genius, patience, and liberality."

This

This singular history, and ludicrous panegyric on Mr. Callico, by this Batchelor of Arts, his *friend*, produced many an horse-laugh from Spavin, whose obstreperous mirth caught the attention of Mrs. Ogle in the next room, who had very frequently put her ear near the key-hole, as curiosity was alive with her ever since she had left the room, as she did not doubt but that the anecdotes which Dr. Singleton was relating to Spavin referred to her relative, Mr. Callico, taylor and legislator: And she would have rushed into the room and given Spavin a specimen of her angry eloquence, had not the fear of Dr. Singleton kept her always at a great distance. The merriment, however, of Mr. Spavin was interrupted by a letter brought by a servant in a very gaudy livery, directed to Mr. Spavin. The letter was short, but during the perusal of it anger and contempt very visibly took their turns of appearance in Spavin's countenance. He shewed it to Dr. Singleton. It was as follow:

Mr.

Mr. SPAVIN,

“ Understanding you know something of the classics, I inform you an assistant’s place is vacant in my academy, if you think yourself qualified to fill this with credit to my school, I flatter myself I shall make it advantageous to you.

DESIDIDERIUS SYLLABUS.”

“ N. B. My institutes must be invariably conformed to by all persons connected with my academy.”

Birch-Grove, May 13.

Dr. Singleton keeping his eye on him, and seeing Spavin’s countenance still under some visible tokens of pride and displeasure, said coolly, “ Why, to be sure, this brandisher of birch twigs writes in a proud, haughty style ; but, as I suppose the fellow is rich, by the air of authority with which
he

he pens his laconic epistle, I do not think it would be a bad speculation to enquire what the terms of his salary are, Mr. Spavin."

"Why, this rascal" says Spavin, "calls himself a Doctor, though I know not where he got his title—not in England, to my knowledge; and report says, this fellow was in a very low state of life: Some say he was a valet to a gentleman in the north, and that his wife ——"

"Nay, if you can prove any of these things, Mr. Spavin," replied Dr. Singleton, drily, "I am the last person in the world that would advise you to form any connections with him; but you know people will abuse a man who is getting wealth apace, if he is an entire stranger as I have heard that he was when he entered on his school. If he, from his former situation in life," continued Dr. Singleton, "labours under literary deficiencies, you will by your superior talents and erudition, gain an ascendancy over him; and

and should any thing occur that might remove him, you would then step into his shoes, and I promise myself in that case, both my own assistance, and that of my friends, Mr. Selden and the Canvasses, to install you in this renowned academy."

The flattering beginning of this harrangue of Dr. Singleton's, made an easy way for the admittance of the advice contained in the latter part of the sentence, and Spavin told his friend, the Doctor, that he would write to Dr. Syllabus, and enquire his terms, which he immediately put into execution.

CHAP. LXXVII.

THE negociation between Mr. Spavin and Dr. Syllabus was soon settled, and Mr. Spavin gave a note of hand to Dr. Singleton, who promised to settle his bill with Callico when he next went to town.

This bill was very considerable, as Spavin's dress was always his first consideration. Dr. Singleton and Mr. Spavin parted with a very good opinion of one another. The former saw in Spavin a young, vain, unthinking man, brought to his senses by the importunity of his creditors, and deserving of pity; and Spavin found in the
Doctor,

Doctor, good sense, coolness of temper, and great generosity.

Before a year had expired, Spavin found the slavery of his situation at the academy intolerable. The haughtiness of Dr. Syllabus towards him, grounded on the knowledge of his poverty, and a jealousy of his superior acquirements, and envy of his superior connections and birth, made Syllabus a savage despot over the time and temper of Spavin. He frequently, therefore, meditated on the means of extricating himself from this prison-house.

He pluck'd up courage at least, and wrote to his old tutor, at Cambridge, intreating him to recommend him as a tutor to the son of some man of wealth and fashion; for tho' Mr. Spavin never conceived any pleasure from the fond and anxious attempt

“ To teach the young idea how to shoot.”

Yet

Yet he thought that any situation, however irksome, would be, in every view of it, preferable to the vulgar tyranny of Dr. Sylabus.

There are some minds, over which the delusions of hope, though often attended with disappointment, exercise a perpetual dominion ; so true is it, that what we wish, we easily believe attainable.

When this letter, to his quondam tutor at Cambridge was sent, the intervening time between the day of writing and the arrival of Mr. Index's letter from Cambridge, the imagination of Spavin was most agreeably employed. The idea of lodging in a spacious house among polite persons ; the luxury of splendored dinners, and the use of two excellent horses for himself and his pupil, form the foreground of this gay prospect ; and in the distant perspective he saw an excellent living, in a sporting country, as the reward of his literary labours.

When

When the letter from Mr. Index arrived, the hopes of Spavin appeared realized :— Mr. Index had recommended him to Mr. Woodpate, a friend of his, and a man of considerable fortune, which, upon enquiry, he found to be nearly ten thousand pounds per annum. His family consisted of nine children. Mr. Woodpate's letter soon arrived, and Spavin read it with a mixture of joy and anxiety :

“ Sir,

“ Mr. Index, the tutor of — hall, has mentioned your name to me as the proper person to superintend the care of my two sons.—I expect that you will never leave them, by day or night. One is eight, and the other nine years old : They have begun their accidence. During the day you will have my garden, where you may exercise your pupils in walking, &c. and at night, by sleeping in the same room, you will be able to superintend the morals and the health
of

of my dear boys. For which important services rendered to my family, I shall be happy to allow you the annual sum of fifty pounds.

Starvling-castle,

I am, Sir,

June 16. Your friend and humble servant,

NODDY WOODPATE.

“ P. S. We cannot wash you.

The rage inspired by these *liberal* terms, together with the heavy disappointment which Spavin felt, cannot easily be described; but as this inhabitant of Starvling-castle, which was only a few miles distant, was known by name in the neighbourhood, Spavin gratified his revenge by showing the letter wherever he went, and rousing the attention of its readers with all the rancour of a most copious comment.

In mercy to the feelings of his old tutor, Mr. Index, who appeared by his letter to be
a good

a good tempered man, and entirely ignorant of the world, he sent no answer to Noddy Woodpate, esq. tho' he had written one with all that bitterness of sarcasm which his wrath at the first reading of his letter inspired him with.

CHAP. LXXVIII.

WHILST Mr. Spavin, 'in penance for past follies,' was thus grinding gerunds under a very hard task master, his friend, Dr. Singleton, was looking out for a house, as he wished much to settle near his friends, the Seldens and Canvasses. Mr. Selden one morning called on him, and was received by Mrs. Ogle, (who opened the door) with no friendly aspect, for Mr. Selden had been a very formidable adversary to her husband, whose

whose conduct he watched, and whose tricks he had the sagacity to discover.

“ Dr. Singleton,” said Mr. Selden, after having passed unnoticed the beauteous Mrs. Ogle, “ I have some news to communicate to you, but I must carefully shut this door, as I know madam Ogle’s prying curiosity, and the contents of this epistle very nearly concerns her. I have just received this letter from my son in London, and your friend,” said Selden, “ the great political taylor, is a bankrupt, and has left the kingdom. The fellow has been detected in handing about seditious hand-bills, and his own party has turned evidence against him, and in true spirit of modern theophanthropy, and democratic patriotism, they have deserted him in his ‘ utmost need ;’ ” and this very political club have chosen a new president, a rich grocer, who is as eloquent, conceited, and wrong-headed as Mr. Callico, if possible. This Mr. Fig, the ‘ Sir-would-be politic,’ had been refused
some

some city honours on account of the turbulent spirit, and indefatigable love of talking, which alarmed the sober men of the various committees on business, and they have rejected him. So Mr. Fig is turned patriot, and is determined to tell the world that those honours which he, lately sought are in a moment become impositions on the public, and great encroachments on the rights of men. But now to business.

“ By the commissioners of Callico’s bankruptcy it has been discovered that his claim to this house was founded on a mortgage made to him by his late cousin Ogle, but the title of this house is clearly made out to be the property of young Canvass, in right of his wife ; and that Mr. Ogle imposed on Dr. Tonic in a pretended exchange. Now, as you wish to have a house, and seem to take a liking to this, I know that young Canvass will be very happy to give you a lease of it during any length of time you may choose.”

“ I am

"I am vastly glad to hear it," replied Dr. Singleton, "for, between ourselves, this Mrs. Ogle is to me very offensive, nor should I have remained so long had not my health required it, tho' the kindnesses of you and the Canvasses smoothed every other inconvenience that I met with."

"Well," said Mr. Selden, "now, Doctor, I will call upon Charles Canvass, and settle the whole business for you; and as to madam," said he, smiling, "who is so formidable to you, my son, the attorney, shall soon make the house too hot to hold her, so give yourself no trouble or anxiety, for a few days will settle you here, and as much at your freedom as a determined batchelor can wish."

This business was soon adjusted, and Dr. Singleton having removed his library from town, and cleared the house of the too lovely Mrs. Ogle, began to resume that philosophical repose, and to enjoy that conversation

with his old friends in leathern coats, which soothed every care and anxiety that respected himself.

The reader may perhaps not guess why the Doctor was so offended with the handsome Mrs. Ogle. The truth was, her former good success in marrying her master, emboldened her to think of other conquests, and no personable man ever lodged in her house whose heart she had not a design upon; in which attempt if she did not succeed, her ill-temper was without disguise and intermission. Tho' she perceived the Doctor's placidity, forbearance and compliance, under all inconveniencies, which was the effect of his general complacency, and the particular attention which he always paid to women, yet she was particularly troublesome to him, in hopes to get him out of the house; and as she was never without applications, on account of the pleasantness of the scite of the house, she thought she

she might find in other male lodgers a temper more likely to be duped and enslaved.

CHAP. LXXVIII.

BEFORE we mention the circumstance that enabled Charles Canvass to assist Mr. Spavin so materially, it will be proper to inform the reader of more of the history of Dr. Syllabus and his lady than we hitherto have done. We have hinted, in the former part of our history, that Dr. Syllabus was valet to a young man of fortune, and that his wife travelled with the said young gentleman to take care of his linen, &c. On some dissatisfaction taking place between the gentleman and his attendants, they parted; and Mr. Puff (the name which Dr. Syllabus in his station then bore, and it was the family name) accompanied Miss Charlotte Curl to England.

They had both saved a pretty sum in the gentleman's service, who was rich, generous, and careless, and had from time to time communicated to each other their respective affairs, and their intentions of soon quitting their present employment, and of returning to England; and founded their hopes of gaining lucrative situations in their own country, on the various accomplishments which they had brought from foreign parts.

Mr. Puff had learned the art of dancing and hair-dressing in France, and Mademoiselle Curl could thrum the harpsichord, and teach the French tongue, without troubling her pupils with the rules of grammar. They soon found employment in those nests of fraud and presumption that swarm in the neighbourhood of London, under the pompous title of academies.

A few years taught this accomplished couple the easiest methods of gaining money, bamboozling parents, and humouring children,

dren, and they were thus soon resolved to purchase a house themselves ; and quitting the slavery of acting subaltern parts in the drama, they were determined to rule and manage for themselves. As their notions of marriage and cohabitation were precisely similar to a certain English philosopher now living, they lodged together, or separated, whenever interest, whim, or inclination, guided their decision on a point which they had learned by their continental connections to be a mere bagatelle. At any time when 'moral integrity and right reason' suggested a division of interests or of hearts, this truly philosophic couple saw little of each other.

On their taking the great house in the neighbourhood of Pagoda Lodge, as we have mentioned, the names of Puff and Curl were sunk in the more respectable and appropriate appellation of Dr. Syllabus and his lady. The Doctor knew enough of foreign universities to suspect that among the diffi-

culties of gaining learned titles there, the paying of fees was not the most inconsiderable, and he got over this matter by paying ten pounds.

Thus becoming a Doctor, he was determined not to conceal his qualifications for that honour, but in a printed card, which set forth his institutes of instruction, an encyclopedical account of the learning of himself and his assistants were set forth in full show.

The appearance of his establishment soon procured him credit among several very credulous tradesmen, and fathers and mothers by dozens flocked from the metropolis to inquire into the particulars of the Doctor's advertisement, or rather, to see the conveniencies of his lodging and table. To all their queries, the Dr. and madam gave the most ready and satisfactory answers, and few parents, of the above description, were unwilling

willing to mistrust persons of their appearance, whose house was so large, and whose establishment and manners appeared so vastly genteel.

With the help of the name of Mr. Spavin, of the university of — annexed to their 'institutes,' the school was at the zenith of its glory, when a circumstance, which we are about to relate in the following chapter, overturned the prosperity of Dr. Syllabus, and the character of his illustrious academy, which was built on the short-liv'd presumption, that

———" Honest men

Are the soft easy cushions on which knaves
Repose and fatten."

CHAP. LXXIX.

NEARLY about the time marked out by our preceding chapter, describing the flourishing state of Dr. Syllabus' institution, the large house belonging to the late Dr. Tonic was taken by a gentleman of fortune by the name of Lincoln. His mode of living was handsome, and he soon became acquainted with Mr. Selden, and the Canvasses ; of the latter of whom he had hired his house, and been put in possession of it with all the conveniences which the remotest hint from Mr. Lincoln could suggest.

Old

Old Mr. Selden's son, whom we have mentioned as a lawyer of eminence in London, and steward to the Duke of —, the present proprietor of the Cassino, had written to his father to inform him, that Mr. Lincoln of the county of —, a friend of the Duke's, and a man of fortune and character, wanted a house at a few miles distance from London; that his health had been a good deal impaired on the continent, and as his duty in Parliament required more attendance than he could give, when living in his own distant county, he wished to be in the neighbourhood of London for a few years. The letter likewise hinted, that if the late Dr. Tonic's house was vacant, he should imagine, that as it was a large one, it would suit Mr. Lincoln, who had a large family, and a considerable retinue.

A few days after this letter from young Selden arrived at Elm-place, and a favourable answer to his queries had been returned,

a very handsome coach and six was seen driving up the avenue leading to Mr. Selden's house. A gentleman of a most elegant appearance, and of most interesting demeanour, stepped out and was welcom'd by his name by Mr. and Mrs. Selden, who did not doubt that this person was the opulent Mr. Lincoln, whom the letter of their son had announced; and their conjectures were right.

The person of Mr. Lincoln seemed, though feeble, to be majestic, and his face, though pale, in the highest degree animated and impressive. Mr. Lincoln addressing himself to Mr. Selden:

“ Your son who is steward to my particular friend, the Duke of —, a very exemplary young nobleman, informed me, that a large house at a small distance from you is vacant, and there is likewise a considerable school in the neighbourhood:
scheme

these circumstances fall in with my present scheme, as I mean to reside near town, and my two sons will be educated at no great distance from me, which will be very agreeable to Mrs. Lincoln, who can scarce part with them for any great time at once."

Mr. Selden, after offering some refreshment, proposed to conduct Mr. Lincoln to view the house of the late Dr. Tonic, which being empty for some considerable period, did not look to advantage; but Mr. Lincoln saw it was easily improveable, and engaged himself to take it of Mr. Charles Canvass, for a certain term of years.

This being settled they proceeded in Mr. Lincoln's carriage to Birch Grove, the illustrious academy of the renowned Dr. Syllabus. On enquiring for the doctor, they were introduced into a spacious apartment, the walls of which were completely filled with folio volumes, which on a close exa-

mination appeared indeed to be of wood, but of excellent gilding and lettering, and adorned with the names of very eminent authors. On the tables stood immense globes, ample and unrolled maps, and telescopes of various dimensions. In a large and highly finished frame, the institutes of the doctor's academy, were written in very large gold letters.

The whole scenery was impressive, and the attention of Mr. Lincoln was deeply occupied when his ear was suddenly assailed by the screaming voice of a female, exclaiming almost in a frantic agony.

“Do not enter the room, my dear doctor.—It is he ; I am sure it is he,—I have been looking at the arms of the coach, they are the same, I remember when on the Continent. Do not go again, for God's sake, or we are ruined, for I know it is he.”

“Woman !”

“Woman,” replied a very solemn tone of voice, “be gone.” The imperial race of man takes not advice from female debility, and the door opening very suddenly displayed the long expected Dr. Syllabus and his enormous wig.

CHAP. LXXX.

THE Doctor, on his entrance, was approaching with a confident step and pompous gesture towards the stranger, when Mr. Lincoln stood fixing his eye fully on the face of the learned Doctor, whose motion now became evidently retrograde, and Mr. Lincoln's progressive. The latter, to the great surprise of Mr. Justice Selden, seized Doctor Syllabus by the collar of his coat, and shook him with such fury, as if he meant

meant to decompose all the constituent particles of the trembling pedagogue.

“Why, you rascal, infamous scoundrel, and impostor, how dare you impose on the public.”

The wrath of Mr. Lincoln blazed so fiercely, that his tongue could not utter the crowded ideas rapidly passing in his mind. Dr. Syllabus was on his knees, and begging that Mr. Lincoln would not expose him.

“This man, Mr. Selden,” repeated Mr. Lincoln, a little more calmly, “was my valet some years since, when I was abroad ;— a fellow of no education, talents, or integrity ; and yet the public must be a dupe to this fellow’s unparalleled impudence.— But I’ll expose him to the world.”

Mr. Selden seeing that the anger of Mr. Lincoln knew no bounds, and fearing that he might proceed rather beyond the limits of
the

the law, by some outrage on the body of Dr. Syllabus, alias Puff, induced him to quit the room and regain his carriage, by full promises of assisting him in the laudable endeavour to show Dr. Syllabus to the public as an illiterate and infamous swindler.

As soon as Mr. Lincoln's carriage was out of Dr. Syllabus' yard, a cabinet council immediately took place between Dr. Syllabus and his wife: The latter, with an absurdity not very uncommon, began with great volubility to hazard various and perplexing conjectures, how this embarrassment might have been prevented; and immediately afterwards to utter very loudly her sorrows for what had happened, and hinting at her advice to the Dr. not to appear before the stranger.

This altercation, as we have before mentioned, was overheard by Mr. Lincoln and Mr. Selden, just before the entrance of Dr. Syllabus himself.—Puff, as we now may call

call him, vexed to be so pestered with a popping jay, answered he knew not what—"We must be off to-morrow early, wife," exclaimed, in great terror, the once formidable pedagogue; "for, by the Lord Harry, what with the impetuous temper of my old master, and the active diligence of that old sly fox, Justice Selden, the house will be too hot to hold us, and we shall be blown up in one moment, and in the next, perhaps, laid into jail for life."

Terror is of an infectious nature;—and Mrs. Puff was now as much frightened as her husband, and as fully convinced, that in a calamity it is wiser to look forward to a remedy, than to lose time in conjecture, or grief for the past.—Mrs. Puff immediately set about packing all the valuable materials, which she thought could be conveyed away most clandestinely. The tent was struck early the next day, and this *bonest* and *accomplished* couple, without looking behind them, made the best of their way to London,

don, and sought to find a safe retreat, like other rogues, amidst the crowds of the metropolis.

This silent and quick departure was the more easily effected, as it happened soon after one of their vacations, when bills due to them being paid in, consoled them fully for this abrupt departure. Leaving a house, the rent of which they still owed, and a great deal of furniture they had not paid for, were circumstances which they had not placed among the evils of their present situation.

CHAP.

CHAP. LXXXI.

WHEN Dr. Singleton had settled himself to his mind, and was growing very intimate with the Seldens and the Canvasses, he had frequently mentioned Spavin's name to them, and regretted his situation. Their dispositions were made of those materials that had some time relented in Spavin's favour; as his conduct to Miss La Blanc, now, to use a lawyer's phrase, caus'd no damages to the plaintiff.

Mrs. Canvass had lately received a letter from Mrs. Pursling, giving an account of her declining health: but that her spirits were ably supported by the attentions of her daughter,

daughter, and the hope of her settling in marriage with a very considerable tradesman in the town, whom Miss La Blanc had treated with becoming frankness and tenderness, though she appeared unwilling that the marriage should be solemnized during her mother's life-time.

The joint families of Elm-place, the Casino, and Pagoda-lodge, promised Dr. Singleton their assistance, on the first opportunity, to make Spavin's situation more comfortable and creditable ; as they justly considered that his late endeavour to provide for himself, by his own diligence and regular conduct, deserved their encouragement, and cleared away any further imputation of his former follies, indiscretions and faults.

When Dr. Singleton mentioned, at Pagoda lodge, the sudden departure of Doctor Syllabus and his lady, they in one instant thought of installing Mr. Spavin in this school ; and when all the families met, a few days

days after, they went altogether to Birchgrove, and proposed the matter to Mr. Spavin.

Mr. Spavin hesitated, and replied, that tho' he was much obliged to them for the offer, and was very willing to undertake the school, yet that the expences of entering on it were so much beyond his power of commanding, that he had despaired of profiting by the present unforeseen circumstances in his favour : That he had written several letters to be sent to the different parents, informing them of the abdication of Doctor Syllabus, which he would lay before them.

On looking at the superscriptions, the parties soon discovered, that out of the twenty boys there were scarce three whose parents they had not some knowledge of.— They therefore laid their scheme before Spavin, viz. that he should consider himself as master ; that they would advance him money for the reputable entry on the premises ;

mises ; and that they would write to the respective parents, and inform them that they were sureties for the school being well conducted by Mr. Spavin, their friend, and curate of the parish, and a man properly educated, and allied to very respectable connections.

This matter being thus settled, the party left Spavin in high spirits, and repeating to them his warm acknowledgments of the kindness which they had shewn him. Mr. Lincoln, who soon brought his family down to the house of the late Dr. Tonic, immediately patronized Mr. Spavin, by sending his own sons to him, and giving him all the recommendation in his power.

Charles Canvass, whose family of boys increased yearly, was also his patron *in futuro*.—Mr. Lincoln was soon appointed a Justice, in which office he was active and uniformly diligent.

The

The various metamorphoses thus effected in the neighbourhood were highly beneficial to the country around.—Mr. Spavin, now Dr. Spavin, raised a large and useful seminary, and with wise precautions drove away all impostors that attempted to set up academies near.—Mr. Selden and Mr. Lincoln, by their wisdom and integrity, checked all the false pretenders to law, who came within their sphere of action.—Dr. Singleton, by practising under the recommendation of the respectable families adjacent, with whom he was acquainted, kept in awe and at a distance, the pernicious quacks and drug sellers.—Captain Canvass and his wife held out a ready hand to the infirm, and the old persons of both sexes that were known to them by proper recommendations ;—and young Charles Canvass, by his extensive concerns in farming, exercised that most useful of all species of charity, the employment of the honest and industrious poor.

For

For many years envy was not known, and a complaint was not heard within the precincts of this well peopled and well regulated NEIGHBOURHOOD, whose various inhabitants bore amply testimony, both by their own feelings, and by the experience of all with whom they had any connections, that the moralist founded his observation on just grounds, when he affirmed, that

“ Virtue alone is happiness below. ”

THE END.

T. PLUMMER, PRINTER,
SEETHING-LANE. }

ERRATA TO VOL. I.

Page 100, for *bee-feater* read *buttettler* (meaning butler in French.)
110, for *Syllabus* read *Syllabus*
118, for *presane* read *profuse*

VOL. II.

Cassino for *Casino* all through

Page 14, for *amoreus sem* read *semi-amor-us*
56, for *animated* read *unanimated*
163, for *Delilah's* read *Dalilah's*
170, The chapters go on a *LXIX* instead of *LIX*, and so throughout



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